



Nottingham
City Council

Nottingham City Local Plan Review

DRAFT STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING REPORT

September 2026

Have your say on the future of Nottingham City

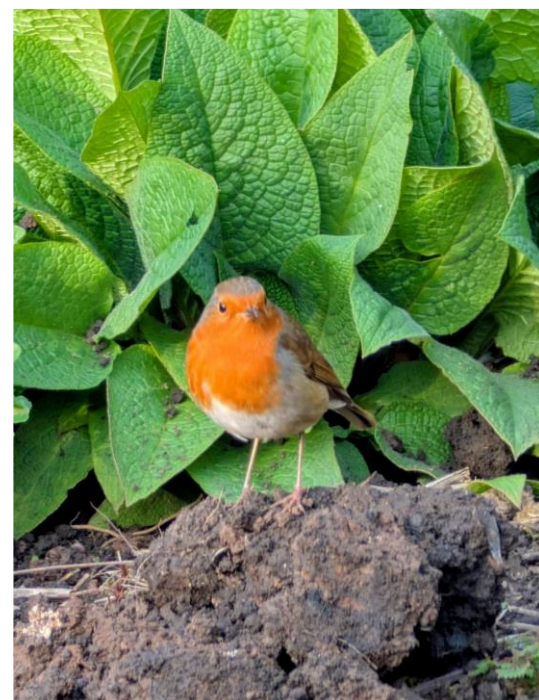


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1. Introduction

The Nottingham Local Plan

Nottingham City Council is preparing a new Local Plan for the Nottingham City Council administrative area. The Local Plan will set the planning policy framework for the city and will be used to guide the location, type, form and delivery of development. It will also provide the starting point for deciding planning applications, alongside national planning policy and other documents that form part of the statutory development plan.

The new Local Plan is being prepared at the start of the new plan-making system introduced in 2026. It will bring together, update and replace the current two-part local plan framework for Nottingham City. This includes the strategic approach currently being progressed through the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and the more detailed policies and allocations in the adopted Land and Planning Policies Document 2020. The purpose of the new plan is to provide a single, city-focused planning framework which is up to date, accessible and aligned with the city's current evidence and priorities.

The Local Plan will not cover all matters that affect development in the city. Waste planning is dealt with through the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan, which was adopted in September 2025. Minerals planning is expected to be progressed separately in collaboration with [Nottinghamshire County Council](#). These documents remain relevant to the Nottingham Local Plan and to this Strategic Environmental Assessment, but they are not being reviewed through this plan-making process.

The Local Plan is being prepared in the context of the [Nottingham City Vision 2050: Home, Heart, Host](#). The Vision sets out a long-term ambition for Nottingham as the Home of diverse and healthy communities, the Heart of a dynamic region and the Host of opportunity, culture and sport. The Vision includes ten bold ideas relating to homes, green infrastructure, transport, energy, innovation, business, small business, sport, independent culture and heritage identity. These ideas are not themselves a Local Plan, but they help explain the spatial and policy issues that the Local Plan will need to address.

Local Plan key information

Item	Information
Name of responsible authority	Nottingham City Council
Title of plan	Nottingham City Local Plan*
Reason for the plan	To prepare an up-to-date Local Plan for Nottingham City under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the 2026 local plan-making regulations and relevant national planning policy.
Area covered	The existing Nottingham City Council administrative area .
Expected plan period	To be confirmed through plan preparation. The SEA will assess effects over the proposed plan period and, where relevant, beyond it.
Main documents to be replaced	The current two-tier Nottingham planning policy framework, including the strategic

	policies and detailed land and planning policies that apply to Nottingham City.
Main exclusions	Waste and minerals planning, except where relevant as part of the wider development plan context and SEA baseline.
Relationship with other assessments	The SEA will be prepared alongside other relevant assessments, including Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment where required. The assessments may be presented through a coordinated or integrated reporting structure, provided that the evidence, methodology, statutory tests and conclusions required for each assessment remain clearly identifiable.

** All references to the local plan being reviewed in this document and the Local Plan Scoping Report and associated webpages are the same as the plan specified in the notice, timetable and plan data as 'Nottingham-City-Council-2026', 'Nottingham City Local Plan' and 'Nottingham-City-Council-Local Plan-2026'.*

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment, or SEA, is a process used to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant environmental effects of certain plans and programmes before they are adopted. The purpose is to integrate environmental considerations into plan preparation, rather than treating them as a separate exercise at the end of the process. For a Local Plan, SEA helps to test whether the emerging spatial strategy, policies and allocations are likely to have positive or negative environmental effects, and whether reasonable alternatives would perform differently.

The SEA is required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 where a plan or programme is prepared for town and country planning or land use and is likely to have significant environmental effects. Local Plans normally fall within this requirement because they set the framework for future development consent. The SEA process also helps the Council meet the wider requirement to contribute to sustainable development through plan-making.

The SEA Regulations identify the environmental topics that should be considered, where relevant. These are biodiversity; population; human health; fauna; flora; soil; water; air; climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; landscape; and the interrelationship between these issues. In this report, closely related topics are grouped together to make the document clearer and easier to use.

Under the new local plan-making system, the Council is undertaking Strategic Environmental Assessment rather than a separate Sustainability Appraisal. However, the SEA Regulations require consideration of a broad range of topics, including population, human health and material assets, as well as their interrelationships with environmental matters. The assessment framework therefore takes a broad but proportionate approach where issues such as housing, infrastructure, accessibility, health, land use and the local economy are relevant to likely significant environmental effects or to the Local Plan's contribution to sustainable development. This does not mean that the SEA is intended to become a full appraisal of all social and economic policy outcomes. Its focus remains on identifying, assessing and mitigating likely significant environmental effects.

The SEA is being prepared at an early stage in the Nottingham Local Plan process. This means that some evidence is still emerging, and some policy choices have not yet been made. Where evidence is incomplete or subject to material uncertainty, this is identified in the relevant section together with the action required during the next assessment stage. These show what further evidence or decision will be needed before the Environmental Report is prepared.

The Council does not currently consider that the Nottingham Local Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects on another state. This position will be kept under review as the Local Plan and SEA progress.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

A Habitats Regulations Assessment screening will be undertaken for the Local Plan if required. If undertaken, it will consider whether the plan is likely to have significant effects on protected habitat sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. However, based on an early review and previous plan-making exercises, it is unlikely that a Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required for the area covered by the Nottingham Local Plan 2026.

Environmental Outcomes Reports

The national planning system is in a period of change. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act includes provisions for a new environmental assessment system based on Environmental Outcomes Reports. However, secondary legislation and transitional arrangements are needed before that system replaces existing SEA requirements. At the time of this draft, the Council is proceeding on the basis that SEA remains the required form of environmental assessment for the emerging Local Plan. If the legal position changes during plan preparation, the Council will review the assessment approach and update the methodology where necessary.

How the SEA will inform plan-making

The SEA will be undertaken as an iterative process alongside preparation of the Local Plan rather than as a separate exercise undertaken after policy drafting. Assessment findings will be used at a number of decision points during plan preparation, including the development of the spatial strategy, the identification and refinement of reasonable alternatives, the preparation of draft policies, the assessment of site allocations and the development of mitigation measures. Where the SEA identifies a likely significant adverse effect, the Council will consider whether the effect can be avoided through changes to the spatial strategy, policy wording, site selection, development requirements or implementation measures before the preferred approach is finalised.

The Environmental Report will explain how assessment findings have influenced the evolution of the Local Plan, including where alternatives have been amended, rejected or preferred and where mitigation has been incorporated into policies or site requirements. The Council will maintain an audit trail linking key planning decisions and SEA findings to provide a transparent record of how environmental considerations have informed plan preparation and option selection.

2. SEA process

Screening

Screening is the first step in the SEA process. It considers whether a plan or programme is likely to require SEA. The Council has determined that SEA is required for the Nottingham Local Plan because it is a plan prepared for town and country planning and land use, and it will set the framework for future development consent. This scoping report therefore proceeds on that basis.

No separate SEA screening report has been prepared at this stage. This draft scoping report should therefore be read as confirming the Council's working position that SEA is required for the Local Plan. The Council will update this position if further national guidance or legal requirements change during plan preparation.

Scoping

Scoping is the first substantive stage of the SEA. Its purpose is to agree the scope and level of detail of the information that should be included in the Environmental Report. A clear scope helps ensure that later assessment work is proportionate and focused on the matters that are most likely to influence the Local Plan.

This report is structured around the main Stage A tasks commonly used in SEA practice.

- Stage A1: identify other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives. This establishes the wider policy context for the Local Plan and SEA.
- Stage A2: collect baseline information. This describes the current environmental characteristics of Nottingham and likely trends.
- Stage A3: identify key environmental issues and problems. This draws out the matters the SEA should focus on.
- Stage A4: develop SEA objectives. These objectives will be used to assess the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives.
- Stage A5: consult on the scope. Statutory consultation bodies and other relevant organisations are invited to comment on whether the proposed scope is appropriate.

The scoping stage is not intended to provide a final assessment of the Local Plan. The Local Plan is still at an early stage and reasonable alternatives are still being identified. This report therefore focuses on setting up a clear framework for later assessment rather than reaching firm conclusions on policy choices or site allocations.

Environmental Report

The Environmental Report will be prepared at a later stage of plan-making. It will assess the likely significant effects of the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives using the SEA framework. It will identify positive and negative effects, including cumulative, secondary, synergistic, short-, medium- and long-term effects. It will also identify mitigation measures where risks of significant adverse effects are found.

The Environmental Report will be published for consultation alongside the draft Local Plan at the relevant consultation stage. It will explain how environmental considerations have informed the plan, how reasonable alternatives have been assessed, and how consultation responses have been considered.

3. Other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives (Task A1)

The starting point for SEA is to understand the policy context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is being prepared. The plan will be influenced by legislation, national planning policy, environmental protection objectives, regional and sub-regional strategies, adopted development plan documents, infrastructure plans and local strategies. These documents help establish the issues that the Local Plan should address and the matters that the SEA should assess.

The review also includes selected infrastructure, transport, utilities, health, housing and economic evidence where these documents are likely to influence the environmental effects of the Local Plan or the deliverability of mitigation. Their inclusion does not mean that the SEA is assessing all wider policy objectives in those documents. It means that they provide relevant context for matters such as material assets, infrastructure capacity, energy demand, accessibility, climate resilience, air quality, water and the reasonable alternatives available to the Local Plan.

This section summarises the most relevant plans, programmes and environmental objectives. It is not intended to reproduce every objective from every source. A fuller schedule is provided at Appendix A. The main purpose here is to identify the messages that are most relevant to Nottingham and to explain how they affect the SEA framework.

International and retained European context

Plan, programme or objective	Main purpose or relevant content	Key implications for the Nottingham Local Plan and SEA
SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Requires assessment of likely significant environmental effects and reasonable alternatives for qualifying plans and programmes.	Provides the legal basis and procedural framework for the SEA, including consultation, mitigation and monitoring.
Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022)	International framework for halting biodiversity loss, restoring ecosystems and improving ecological connectivity.	Assess protection, restoration and connection of habitats, including designated sites, priority habitats and the wider urban ecological network.
UN 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (2015)	Global framework covering poverty, health, inequality, sustainable cities, responsible consumption, climate action and biodiversity.	Use the SDGs as a broad reference point. The SEA framework should address healthy and inclusive communities, resource use, climate, water and biodiversity without treating the goals as local statutory targets.
Paris Agreement (2015)	International commitment to limit global temperature rise and strengthen adaptation and climate resilience.	Assess how spatial choices influence greenhouse gas emissions, low-carbon energy, sustainable transport, overheating, flood resilience and green infrastructure.
European Landscape Convention (2000, signed in UK in 2006)	Promotes the protection, management and planning of landscapes, recognising their importance to environmental quality, cultural identity, health, wellbeing and sustainable development. Applies to urban, peri-urban and rural landscapes.	Assess effects on landscape character, townscape, visual amenity, local distinctiveness and sense of place. Consider opportunities to enhance landscape quality, strengthen green infrastructure networks and support high-quality placemaking.

UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters — Aarhus Convention (1998)	Establishes rights relating to access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making and access to justice. It applies to plans and programmes relating to the environment.	Publish accessible environmental information and provide effective opportunities for participation while options remain open. Record how consultation responses have influenced the SEA scope, reasonable alternatives, mitigation and the Local Plan.
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised, 1992)	Promotes protection of archaeological heritage as a source of collective memory and evidence.	Assess effects on known and potential archaeology, including Nottingham's caves and cave systems and below-ground remains.
Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, as implemented through domestic legislation	The Habitats Directive addresses the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.	Undertake HRA where required and consider pathways including air quality, water, recreation and ecological connectivity, while keeping SEA and HRA tests distinct.

National context

Plan, programme or objective	Main purpose or relevant content	Key implications for the Nottingham Local Plan and SEA
Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026	Provide the procedural framework for local plans under the new plan-making system. The Regulations came into force on 25 March 2026 and operate alongside transitional arrangements for legacy plans.	Ensure commencement, project management, consultation, evidence publication, examination and monitoring comply with the applicable new-system requirements. Make SEA findings available at the stages when they can influence choices.
National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance (2026)	Provide national policy and guidance for plan-making and development, including housing, economy, centres, transport, design, climate, flood risk, natural environment, heritage and minerals.	Ensure the Local Plan is consistent with national policy. Reflect relevant guidance on evidence, reasonable alternatives, proportionality, viability, uncertainty and monitoring.
National Grid Electricity Distribution Network Development Plan 2026	Sets out National Grid Electricity Distribution's ten-year plan for developing the electricity distribution network. It assesses the future suitability of the network to meet demand and generation growth over the next 5 to 10 years, identifies locations where network constraints may require intervention, and considers possible solutions including flexibility services, conventional reinforcement and operational mitigation. The latest Network Development Plans were published on 1 May 2026 and are supported by network headroom information and the Network Opportunity and Development Map.	Use alongside the Local Area Energy Plan, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and site assessment work to assess whether growth locations can be supported by electricity distribution-network capacity. Consider implications for heat decarbonisation, electric vehicle charging, renewable energy, battery storage, data centres and other energy-intensive uses. Identify where development may require network reinforcement, substations, cable routes, flexibility solutions, phasing triggers or land safeguarding, and avoid assuming that low-carbon energy measures are deliverable without considering local network capacity and timing.
National Framework for Water Resources 2025, updated 2026	Sets out England's long-term water-resource needs and the scale of action required for resilient, environmentally sustainable supplies across public	Assess growth-related water demand, water efficiency, local network and supply constraints, environmental limits and alignment with regional and water-company plans. Avoid treating regional

	water supply, energy, food and other sectors.	supply balance as proof of site-level capacity.
National standards for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), updated 2025.	Set national expectations for the design and performance of sustainable drainage systems, including the management of runoff quantity and quality and consideration of amenity, biodiversity, construction, adoption, operation and long-term maintenance.	Use the standards when assessing drainage policy, development options and mitigation. Ensure that SuDS are integrated into site design, have clear adoption and maintenance arrangements and provide multifunctional benefits where these are compatible with flood-risk, water-quality, biodiversity and amenity requirements.
Road Investment Strategy 3 and National Highways Strategic Road Network evidence	Sets Government's priorities for the strategic road network for 2026 to 2031, including operation, maintenance, renewal, performance and enhancement of England's motorways and major A roads. National Highways' supporting evidence identifies network performance, constraints, customer and stakeholder priorities and possible future interventions.	Assess whether growth options affect the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network, including traffic, freight, junction capacity, severance, air quality, carbon emissions and construction impacts. Distinguish committed schemes from pipeline or aspirational interventions and identify where early engagement with National Highways is needed.
Environmental Improvement Plan: annual progress report 2025 to 2026	The report reviews progress across the EIP's ten goals, including nature recovery, air and water quality, waste and resources, climate resilience, biosecurity and public access to nature, and identifies areas where further action is required	Provides the most recent evidence on national environmental trends, progress towards statutory environmental targets and delivery priorities that can inform the SEA baseline and assessment framework. The report should be used to review whether Local Plan policies are aligned with current environmental objectives, target delivery pathways and emerging implementation priorities set out in the EIP 2025.
Environmental Improvement Plan 2025	The current statutory Environmental Improvement Plan for England. It builds on the 25 Year Environment Plan and the 2023 EIP and is structured around ten goals for restoring nature, improving environmental quality, creating a circular economy, environmental security and access to nature.	Use relevant goals and statutory target delivery plans to assess nature recovery, protected sites, water and air quality, waste and resource efficiency, climate resilience and access to nature.
Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025	Introduces reforms to infrastructure and planning delivery, including a framework for Environmental Delivery Plans and associated nature-restoration measures. Provisions are being commenced in stages and supported by regulations and guidance.	Monitor commencement and secondary legislation. Assess infrastructure and environmental dependencies without assuming that an Environmental Delivery Plan will remove the need for site-specific avoidance or mitigation unless the legal mechanism applies.
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012, updated December 2024)	Sets national policy for assessing need and identifying suitable accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and should be read with the NPPF.	Ensure housing and community assessment considers relevant accommodation needs, site supply, accessibility, environmental suitability and equal-treatment requirements.

Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3), 2023-2028	Sets government actions for adapting to climate risks from 2023 to 2028, including heat, flooding, drought, infrastructure disruption, health and natural environment risks. Published in 2023; corrected in 2024.	Assess overheating, flood resilience, water stress, green infrastructure and the vulnerability of communities, buildings and infrastructure.
Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)	Provides principles, standards and mapping resources for accessible, connected and multifunctional green and blue infrastructure.	Assess quantity, quality, accessibility, connectivity, management and the distribution of green-infrastructure benefits, while recognising local evidence and deliverability.
Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and Environmental Outcomes Reports provisions	Introduces planning reforms and powers for a future Environmental Outcomes Reports system, subject to secondary legislation and transition arrangements.	Keep the environmental-assessment regime under review and record any legal or methodological change during plan preparation.
Humber River Basin Management Plan, updated 2022	Sets statutory objectives and programmes of measures to prevent deterioration and improve the ecological and chemical status of water bodies within the Humber River Basin District.	Assess effects on the Trent, Leen, canals, groundwater and receiving waters, including wastewater, contaminated land pathways and measures that support water-body objectives.
Environment Act 2021	Establishes statutory environmental targets and measures for biodiversity net gain, local nature recovery, air quality, water, resource efficiency and environmental governance.	Assess biodiversity net gain, nature recovery, water and air quality, waste reduction and alignment with the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)	Sets the national strategy for reducing transport greenhouse gas emissions through mode shift, public transport, active travel, cleaner vehicles and place-based transport planning.	Assess whether the spatial strategy reduces the need to travel by private car and supports walking, cycling, public transport, freight efficiency and accessible development patterns.
Clean Air Strategy 2019 and local air-quality management framework	Sets the national direction for reducing air pollutant emissions and associated health and environmental effects, alongside statutory local air-quality management duties.	Assess emissions and exposure from transport, heating, construction and other sources, including the siting of sensitive uses and unequal exposure.
National Design Guide (2019) and National Model Design Code (2021)	Set national principles for well-designed places, including context, movement, nature, public space, built form, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.	Assess design quality, density, tall buildings, public realm, accessibility, liveability, climate response and local distinctiveness.
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	Provides the domestic framework for protecting habitats sites and species and for undertaking Habitats Regulations Assessment.	Coordinate SEA and HRA evidence, including in-combination effects, while keeping their legal tests and conclusions distinct.
National Planning Policy for Waste (2014) and Waste Management Plan for England (2021)	Sets national planning policy and the wider plan for sustainable waste management, resource efficiency and movement up the waste hierarchy.	Avoid conflict with safeguarded waste infrastructure and assess building reuse, materials, construction waste and circular-economy opportunities without duplicating the Waste Local Plan.

Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and national flood-risk policy	Sets responsibilities for managing local flood risk, including Lead Local Flood Authority functions, and supports sustainable drainage and coordinated risk management.	Apply the sequential approach; assess all sources of flooding, climate allowances and residual risk; and consider SuDS delivery, adoption and maintenance.
Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty	Requires public authorities to have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.	Coordinate SEA with Equality Impact Assessment and identify whether environmental benefits, risks and access to services are distributed differently between groups and places.
Climate Change Act 2008, carbon budgets and national net zero policy	Establishes the legally binding emissions-reduction framework, carbon budgets and national climate adaptation cycle.	Assess emissions within planning influence, low-carbon infrastructure and resilience over the lifetime of development, distinguishing statutory targets from local ambitions.
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended	Provides the statutory basis for local development plans and requires plan-making bodies to exercise relevant functions with the objective of contributing to sustainable development.	Align the Local Plan, SEA evidence, consultation and decision-making audit trail with the statutory plan-making framework.
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006	Provide statutory protection for wildlife and sites and establish the public authority duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.	Assess effects on designated and non-designated sites, protected and priority species, habitats and ecological networks.
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	Provide statutory protection for scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas and establish relevant consent and decision-making duties.	Assess heritage significance, setting, archaeology, cumulative townscape effects and opportunities for appropriate reuse and enhancement.

Sub-regional and development plan context

Plan, programme or objective	Main purpose or relevant content	Key implications for the Nottingham Local Plan and SEA
East Midlands Combined County Authority Corporate Plan 2025-2026 and investment / spatial programmes, including the Spatial Development Strategy (emerging)	Sets the Combined County Authority's near-term priorities and delivery programmes for transport, skills, housing, economic development and net zero across the East Midlands.	Reflect funded and reasonably foreseeable cross-boundary investment and dependencies, particularly strategic transport and energy, while distinguishing commitments from aspirations.
Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire (emerging)	Strategic assessment of future energy demand, heat decarbonisation, electricity infrastructure requirements, energy generation, storage and network investment.	Assess whether growth options support identified opportunities for heat network expansion, renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure, electricity network reinforcement, energy resilience and decarbonisation pathways.
East Midlands Combined County Authority Mayor's Transport Plan / emerging regional Local Transport Plan (emerging)	Emerging long-term transport strategy for the EMCCA area. EMCCA is now the Local Transport Authority and is developing a single area-wide Local Transport Plan. Once adopted, it is expected to replace the existing Local Transport Plans for Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.	Align the Local Plan with emerging regional transport priorities, including public transport, active travel, strategic connectivity, freight, decarbonisation, accessibility and investment. Distinguish adopted commitments from emerging priorities and ensure growth options are assessed against realistic transport capacity, phasing and funding assumptions.

Network Rail East Midlands Route and Midland Main Line Upgrade evidence (emerging)	Provides infrastructure context for rail services and investment across the East Midlands, including Nottingham's connections on the Midland Main Line. Current route information identifies the East Midlands route, the Midland Main Line and ongoing upgrade work including electrification intended to support more reliable, quieter and greener journeys.	Assess how development options relate to rail accessibility, station capacity, interchange, freight movements, construction disruption and opportunities to support lower-carbon regional travel. Avoid assuming that service or infrastructure improvements are committed unless confirmed through Network Rail, DfT or operator evidence.
Midlands Connect strategy, studies and business plans (on-going)	Sets strategic transport priorities for the Midlands, including road, rail, freight, innovation, electric vehicle infrastructure and wider regional connectivity. Midlands Connect develops and promotes transport projects intended to provide economic, social and environmental benefits across the region.	Consider cross-boundary transport dependencies, regional connectivity, freight, public transport, decarbonisation and the relationship between Nottingham's growth strategy and wider Midlands investment priorities. Distinguish strategic priorities and business-case development from funded delivery commitments.
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan (adopted September 2025)	Provides the statutory waste planning strategy and development-management framework for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.	Do not duplicate waste policy. Recognise safeguarded facilities, capacity, resource efficiency and the relationship between the new Local Plan and the wider development plan.
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025)	Statutory spatial strategy identifying local priorities and opportunity areas for nature recovery.	Use published priorities and mapping to assess habitat protection, restoration, connectivity, biodiversity net gain and long-term management.
Biodiversity Net Gain Framework for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham (2025)	Provides a shared local approach to implementing mandatory biodiversity net gain, including strategic priorities, delivery expectations and alignment with nature recovery evidence.	Use the confirmed framework and metric arrangements to assess the location, additionality, long-term management and monitoring of biodiversity gains, while avoiding double counting.
Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and Sustainability Appraisal (Publication Draft 2025 and subsequent stages)	Provide the emerging strategic growth framework and associated assessment evidence for Greater Nottingham.	Use relevant evidence and assessment findings, but reassess reasonable alternatives and effects for the Nottingham City Local Plan and its geographical scope. Update the status before publication.
Greater Nottingham Water Cycle Study (2024)	Assesses water supply, wastewater, water quality and flood-related infrastructure constraints associated with planned growth to 2041.	Align the location and phasing of growth with water and wastewater capacity and identify where reinforcement, environmental capacity or mitigation remains uncertain.
Severn Trent Water Resources Management Plan 2024 and Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan 2023	Set the water company's plans for secure water supplies and long-term drainage and wastewater resilience, including demand, capacity, investment and environmental pressures.	Test growth and phasing against confirmed or programmed water and wastewater capacity. Distinguish existing capacity from schemes dependent on regulatory approval, future funding or developer contributions.
Greater Nottingham Blue-Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022)	Identifies strategic blue-green assets, networks and opportunities across Greater Nottingham.	Protect and strengthen cross-boundary ecological, water, active-travel and recreation networks while applying current city-specific evidence.
Humber River Basin Management Plan (2022) and Lower Trent and Erewash abstraction licensing strategy (current)	Provide catchment and water-resource objectives for water quality, ecological status, abstraction and water availability.	Assess cumulative water demand and quality effects on the Trent, Leen, canals, groundwater and associated habitats.

Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan (2021) and future minerals planning arrangements for Nottingham City	Sets minerals supply, safeguarding and environmental protection policies for Nottinghamshire; future arrangements for the city should be confirmed.	Consider safeguarded mineral resources and infrastructure where relevant, while avoiding duplication of separate minerals-plan work.
Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2021)	Assesses accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and boat dwellers across the study area.	Use the latest findings or successor evidence to assess whether needs are addressed and whether potential locations are environmentally suitable and accessible.
Nottingham Core and Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study (2021) and Logistics Study (2022)	Provide evidence on employment and logistics land needs across the functional economic area.	Assess employment provision, accessibility, freight and transport effects, land-use compatibility and environmental constraints, distinguishing city needs from wider-area needs.
Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Housing Needs Assessment (2020; 2024 update)	Provides evidence on housing need, type, tenure, affordability and market characteristics.	Inform assessment of housing supply, mix, affordability, accessibility and specialist needs, using newer city evidence where available.
Nottinghamshire Air Quality Strategy 2020-2030	Provides a cross-boundary framework for reducing nitrogen dioxide and particulate pollution and associated health effects.	Assess transport, domestic and commercial emissions and exposure and support consistent cross-boundary action, using current Nottingham monitoring evidence.
Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham City Aligned Core Strategies (2014)	Adopted strategic development plan policies for Nottingham City, with a plan period to 2028.	Use as part of the existing-plan baseline; identify policies to be retained or replaced and compare effects against the current development plan.
Greater Nottingham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010), 2017 addendum and subsequent reviews/updates	Provides strategic evidence on fluvial and other flood risks, including the Trent and Leen, with later reviews and modelling updates.	Use the most current mapping and modelling; record model age, climate allowances, defence dependency, residual risk and areas requiring site-specific assessment.

Local Nottingham strategies and evidence

Plan, programme or objective	Main purpose or relevant content	Key implications for the Nottingham Local Plan and SEA
Nottingham City Vision 2050: Home, Heart, Host (2026, emerging)	Long-term city vision covering homes, green infrastructure, transport, energy, innovation, business, culture, sport and heritage.	Test the environmental effects and delivery dependencies of spatial choices associated with the Vision; do not treat vision ambitions as statutory policy tests.
Nottingham City Council Plan 2025-2029	Sets current corporate priorities and intended outcomes for local people and the city.	Identify where the Local Plan can support housing, regeneration, infrastructure, environmental improvement and inclusive growth.
Tomorrow's NUH Programme	Long-term programme led by Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust to modernise and reconfigure healthcare facilities, including redevelopment of the Queen's Medical Centre and City Hospital campuses, improvements to clinical infrastructure, and investment in new healthcare facilities over the lifetime of the Local Plan.	Assess the implications of hospital redevelopment, expansion and rationalisation for land use, accessibility, transport demand, health infrastructure capacity, energy use, carbon emissions and environmental quality. Consider whether growth options safeguard land required for healthcare infrastructure and support sustainable access to major health facilities.

Nottingham Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (Current assessment; update expected by the end of 2026)	Provides a strategic overview of past flooding, locally significant flood-risk areas and interactions between sources of flood risk within Nottingham.	Use alongside the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, national flood-risk mapping and site-specific evidence. Review the updated Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment before the Environmental Report and site assessment are finalised and incorporate any findings that materially change the baseline, assessment of alternatives or mitigation requirements.
Nottingham Environment and Climate Assembly Manifesto (2026)	Community-led statement setting out priorities and aspirations relating to climate action, biodiversity, energy, transport, green infrastructure, sustainable development and environmental quality within Nottingham.	Consider whether Local Plan options support community aspirations for climate mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity recovery, sustainable transport, renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure, urban greening and environmental improvement. Use the Manifesto as evidence of community priorities and perception rather than as a statutory policy requirement.
Connected Energy City and heat network strategies, including Heat Network Zoning Opportunity Report: Nottingham (2025)	Supports existing and potential district heating and low-carbon energy infrastructure.	Assess heat-network opportunities, future heat sources, network capacity, viability and phasing, without assuming delivery is secured. The SEA should assess whether growth options support identified heat network zones, safeguard land for required infrastructure and facilitate strategic energy connections.
Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2025)	Sets the Council's approach to local flood risk, resilience, evidence, asset management and nature-based solutions.	Assess surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses, SuDS, vulnerable communities and delivery and maintenance responsibilities.
Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (living document, frequent updates)	Identifies health priorities, inequalities and wider determinants of health.	Assess distributional effects on health, housing, air quality, active travel, open space, services and climate vulnerability.
Nottingham Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027	Promotes equality, accessibility and inclusive decision-making.	Coordinate SEA and Equality Impact Assessment and consider who benefits or is exposed to environmental harm.
Homes Fit for the Future 2024-2028	Current housing strategy covering supply, quality, homelessness and changing needs.	Assess housing mix, affordability, quality, accessibility, specialist housing, rented housing and neighbourhood balance.
Nottingham Economic Growth Plan (2024) and emerging city centre regeneration strategies	Sets priorities for jobs, skills, innovation, business growth and regeneration.	Assess employment land, city-centre renewal, inclusive access to jobs, infrastructure and environmental effects.
Greener, Healthier, Happier Nottingham Strategy and Green Grid proposals (2024)	Framework for connected green infrastructure supporting biodiversity, health, active travel and climate resilience.	Assess green-space access, ecological connectivity, active travel, cooling, drainage and deliverability, including maintenance.
Eating and Moving for Good Health Strategy 2022-2032	Promotes healthier food and physical activity through a whole-system approach.	Assess healthy food environments, walkable neighbourhoods, active travel and access to recreation and open space.
Open and Green Spaces Quality Audit (2021) and current open-space evidence	Assesses the quantity, type, quality, value and accessibility of open and green spaces.	Distinguish ecological value, open-space quality and practical accessibility. Assess local deficiencies, barriers and management requirements.

Nottingham City Land and Planning Policies Document (2020)	Adopted detailed policies and site allocations for Nottingham City.	Assess retained, amended and replacement policies and allocations against updated evidence.
Carbon Neutral Nottingham 2028 Charter	City-wide framework for reducing carbon emissions and planning energy-system change.	Assess development location, transport, building reuse, heat networks, renewable energy, grid constraints and climate adaptation, proportionate to planning influence.
Air Quality Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire 2020-2030 and Nottingham Annual Status Reports	Provides strategic objectives and current monitoring evidence for air quality.	Use current monitoring and AQMA evidence to assess emissions, exposure, sensitive uses and cumulative transport and construction effects.
Nottingham Playing Pitch Strategy (2015-2020) and other sport and recreation evidence	Assesses current and future requirements for playing pitches and associated facilities.	Assess protection, enhancement and provision of sports facilities, taking account of accessibility, land requirements and changing demand.
Nottingham Heritage Strategy (2015-2030), conservation area documents, Historic Environment Record and Caves Technical Guide	Local framework and evidence for designated and non-designated heritage, archaeology, conservation areas and caves.	Assess significance, setting, archaeology, caves, strategic views, heritage at risk and opportunities for appropriate reuse and interpretation.
Nottingham Local Transport Plan 3 and successor transport arrangements (2011 to 2026)	Current local transport strategy for Nottingham covering the period 2011 to 2026, addressing buses, trams, trains, cycling, walking networks and roads. It remains relevant local transport context pending replacement by the emerging EMCCA area-wide Local Transport Plan.	Use as current local transport evidence until superseded, particularly for public transport, active travel, congestion, accessibility, transport emissions, asset resilience and integration with land-use planning. Update the SEA and Local Plan evidence base as EMCCA successor transport policy is adopted.
Nottingham City Centre Urban Design Guide (2009) and emerging design, tall buildings and strategic views evidence	Provides city-centre design guidance and evidence on urban form and character.	Assess density, building height, skyline, microclimate, public realm, heritage relationships, liveability and infrastructure capacity.
Nottingham Contaminated Land Strategy (2001)	Sets the Council's statutory approach to identifying and managing contaminated land.	Assess land-quality risks and opportunities for remediation, while recognising that detailed conclusions require site investigation.

For a more detailed overview, see Appendix A.

4. Baseline (Task A2)

This section describes the current environmental characteristics of Nottingham and, where evidence allows, how they are likely to change without the new Local Plan. It establishes the baseline against which the likely significant effects of the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives will be assessed and focuses on matters that can reasonably be influenced by spatial planning.

Each topic identifies the principal environmental assets, conditions, pressures, trends and inequalities, followed by an assessment of likely future change under the existing planning and regulatory framework.

These limitations and any material uncertainty are identified where they affect interpretation. The baseline will be reviewed as the Local Plan develops and updated where new evidence, consultation responses or revised datasets could materially affect the assessment.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna

Current baseline

This topic covers designated and non-designated sites, habitats, species, ecological networks, open space and wider green and blue infrastructure. Nottingham is a compact and densely developed urban authority, but it contains an extensive and varied network of natural and semi-natural habitats. These include the River Trent, River Leen and Day Brook corridors, canals, wetlands, parks, woodlands, grasslands, allotments, cemeteries, former railway land and other post-industrial habitats. While substantial, this resource does not form a single continuous network. Ecological function therefore depends partly on the connectivity provided by smaller habitat patches, watercourses, trees, hedgerows and other linear features that link larger sites across the urban area.

The Council commissioned a one off city-wide habitat baseline to provide a consistent spatial record of habitats across Nottingham (circa 2022, amended 2024). The baseline maps the administrative area using the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) system with a minimum mapping unit of 25 square metres. Habitats were classified to at least UKHab Level 3 using Ordnance Survey MasterMap, existing environmental data, remote sensing and aerial imagery, with field survey information used to refine mapping at selected locations. Targeted surveys were undertaken at 73 recognised or candidate Local Wildlife Sites, nature reserves and other sites of ecological interest. Within these sites, habitats were generally classified to UKHab Level 4, supported by secondary habitat codes and assessments of habitat condition as good, moderate or poor.

Analysis of the baseline indicates that circa 34% of the city was classified as non-urban green or blue habitat. Separate analysis using Council and Ordnance Survey datasets produces broadly similar estimates of total green and blue coverage, ranging from approximately 30% to 37% of the city depending on the definitions applied and the treatment of water features. However, total coverage alone does not indicate habitat quality, condition, connectivity or public accessibility. The open-space typologies used as a broad accessibility proxy cover around 16% of the city, but this does not account for factors such as entrances, barriers, condition, facilities or suitability for different users.

The detailed UK Habitat Classification data provide a more precise account of the habitats that make up Nottingham's strategic biodiversity baseline. Modified grassland is the largest category at 1,077 hectares (42%), followed by broadleaved mixed and yew woodland at 897.94 hectares (35%). (Note that this includes some treed areas within gardens and urban areas.) Neutral grassland accounts for 187 hectares, arable and horticultural land for 160 hectares, and hedgerows for 142 hectares. Smaller areas of acid and calcareous grassland, dwarf shrub heath, fen, marsh and swamp, dense scrub and coniferous woodland add ecological variety and may have importance disproportionate to their area.

UKHAB: LEVEL 2	UKHAB: LEVEL 3	Area (Ha)	% NCC greenspace	% of NCC
Cropland	Arable and horticulture	160	6%	2%
Grassland	Acid grassland	20	1%	0%
Grassland	Calcareous grassland	0.2	0%	0%
Grassland	Modified grassland	1,077	42%	14%
Grassland	Neutral grassland	187	7%	3%
Heathland and shrub	Dense scrub	73	3%	1%
Heathland and shrub	Dwarf shrub heath	3	0%	0%
Heathland and shrub	Hedgerows	142	6%	2%
Wetland	Fen marsh and swamp	7	0%	0%
Woodland and forest	Broadleaved mixed and yew woodland	898	35%	12%
Woodland and forest	Coniferous woodland	7	0%	0%
Total		2,574		34%
<i>Rivers and Lakes</i>		<i>142</i>		<i>2%</i>

NCC Habitat Survey data on habitats at Level 2 and 3 (approximate)

For SEA purposes, these figures establish the broad distribution and relative scarcity of habitat types against which reasonable alternatives and likely significant effects can be assessed. They do not, on their own, indicate habitat condition, species value, connectivity or sensitivity, and should therefore be interpreted with the mapped habitat baseline, site survey evidence and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

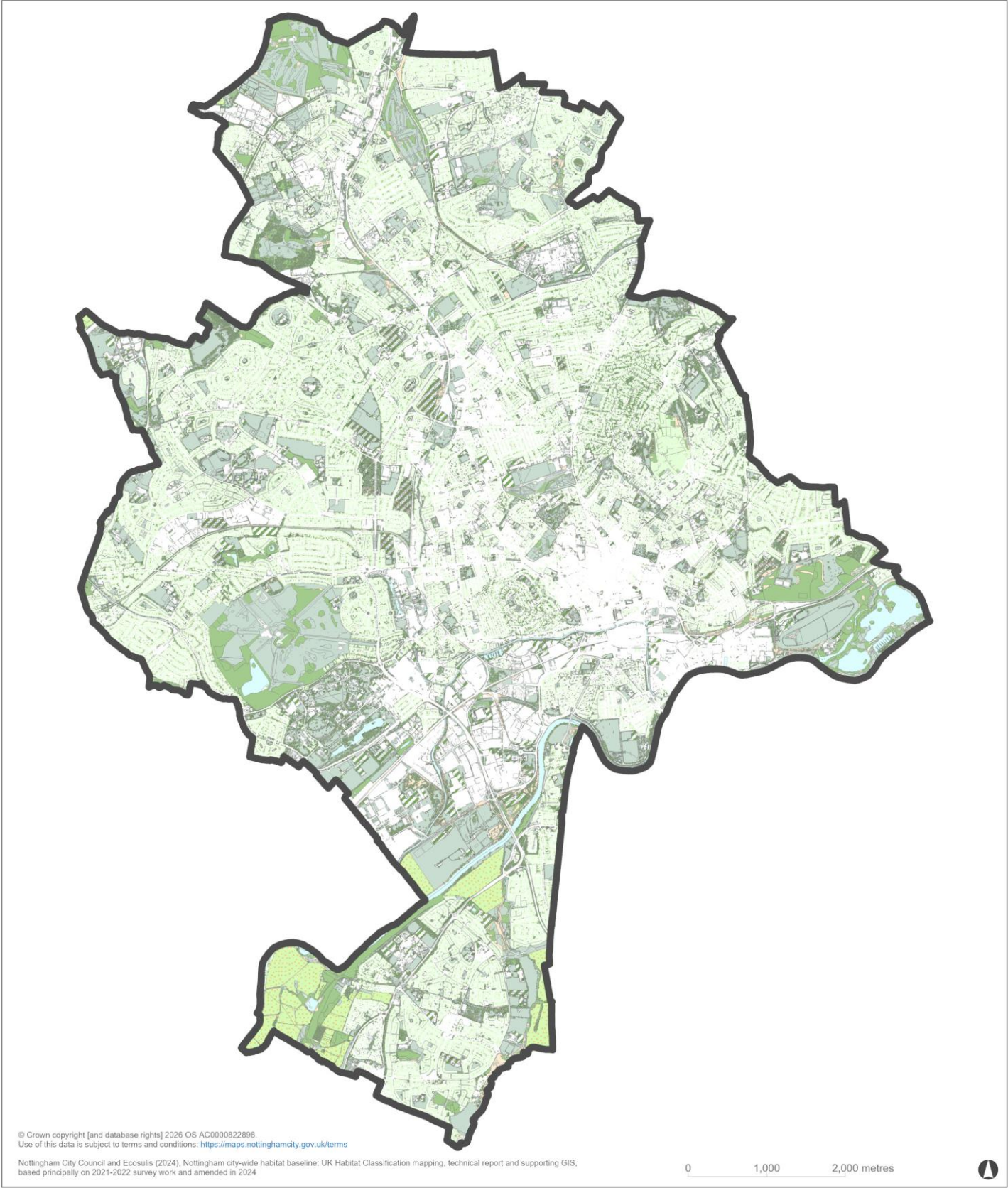
One other notable feature within Nottingham's urban habitats is the extent of the 'suburban/ mosaic of developed/ natural surface' category, which accounts for at least 1,673 hectares within the city. This classification includes most residential gardens, associated green spaces within housing areas and allotments. Note however that some of this space will include paved areas, such as garden patios.

A further 359 hectares of unclassified urban land intersect with the NCC Open and Green Space layer and should therefore likely also have been classified as some form of greenspace. Together, these areas total approximately 2,032 hectares, representing around 27% of Nottingham's land area. The scale of this habitat highlights the important contribution that often-overlooked spaces make to the city's green infrastructure network.

When considered alongside the previously discussed habitat data (i.e. conventional greenspace), the data indicates that - roughly – almost two thirds of Nottingham is comprised of green or blue space in some form (see Figure 1 overleaf), demonstrating the significant role that both public and private green spaces play in the city's environmental character and ecological function. It should be noted, however, that a manual review suggests some allotment sites may not be fully captured within the current classification, meaning the true extent of this habitat may be somewhat greater.

The biodiversity value of these areas should not be underestimated. While individual gardens and small green spaces may be relatively modest in size, collectively they provide habitat, food sources and shelter for a wide range of species, while helping to connect larger ecological assets such as parks, woodlands and river corridors. As a result, they make an important contribution to ecological connectivity across the city and support wider environmental functions, including urban cooling, surface water management and opportunities for residents to experience nature close to home.

Figure 1 - Indicative map of green and blue space in Nottingham City Council (21/22)



Key

	NCC Boundaries		Heathland and shrub
	Greenspace in Urban areas - Gardens, Allotments, etc.		Rivers and lakes
	NCC Habitat Survey		Wetland
	Cropland		Woodland and forest
	Grassland		Further Potential Greenspace



The cumulative contribution of gardens, allotments and other mosaic urban habitats is therefore likely to be significant for both nature recovery and the long-term resilience of Nottingham's urban environment.

The site surveys provide additional detail on the scale and composition of habitats at individual locations. The largest surveyed sites included Wollaton Park at approximately 204 hectares, Bulwell Hall Park at approximately 94 hectares, Colwick Country Park at approximately 89 hectares, Colwick Wood at approximately 44 hectares and Bulwell Forest Golf Course at approximately 40 hectares. Other substantial sites included Strelley Hall Park, Hungerhill Gardens, Forest Recreation Ground and Southglade Park. Together, these sites contain different combinations of woodland, grassland, scrub, wetland, standing water and urban habitats, illustrating the variety of ecological resources present across the city.

The evidence also demonstrates that biodiversity value is not confined to large parks or designated nature conservation sites. Surveyed locations include river and canal corridors, ponds, wetlands, established and wet woodland, grassland, scrub, cemeteries, allotments, disused railway land and former industrial sites. Smaller sites such as Basford Junction, Sneinton Railway Lands, Beeston Sidings, King's Meadow Grassland and several disused railway corridors support varied habitat mosaics. Previously developed and infrastructure land should therefore not be assumed to have low biodiversity value.

The habitat evidence also has limitations. The baseline provides a snapshot and some habitat boundaries and conditions may have changed since mapping was completed. Most targeted surveys were undertaken between September 2021 and February 2022 and sites were generally visited once. Survey timing limited species detection, particularly during the winter period. Grassland outside surveyed sites was generally classified as modified grassland, while the possible presence of acidic or calcareous grassland was inferred from geology at lower confidence. And, as mentioned, assessment of woodland areas included a number of areas within gardens and streets as opposed to dedicated woodland sites. Furthermore, there may be some small overlaps between features. Therefore, the baseline is suitable for strategic assessment at a broad level and screening but should not replace current site-specific ecological surveys.

To provide an independent comparison with the habitat baseline, the Living England 2022–2023 dataset was also examined. This is a national broad habitat map produced by Natural England using satellite imagery, field records and other geospatial data within a machine-learning framework. The categories extracted for Nottingham cover 2,143 hectares, equivalent to approximately 29% of the city, compared with 2,574 hectares, or around 34%, in the detailed city-wide habitat survey. The Living England figures should not be treated as a complete measure of greenspace, as the dataset maps broad habitats rather than all green space, and is mapped to a much coarser scale. However, it provides a useful comparison to habitat survey data.

In Living England data for NCC, improved and semi-improved grassland accounts for 837 hectares, or 39% of its mapped habitat area, while broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland accounts for 698 hectares, or 33%. The two datasets therefore agree that grassland and broadleaved woodland form the largest parts of Nottingham's habitat resource. Living England records smaller overall areas of these habitats, but substantially more dwarf shrub heath, fen, marsh and swamp, and coniferous woodland. These differences are likely to reflect their different methods, resolution and classifications rather than habitat change. Living England provides a consistent national comparator, while the more detailed UKHab survey should remain the principal local baseline for assessing Local Plan alternatives, although more up to date sources of habitat data will be investigated as well and if adequate, be used instead. Material differences should be checked against aerial imagery, site surveys and other ecological evidence.

Primary Habitat	Area (Ha)	%
Arable and Horticultural	118	5%
Bare Ground	17	1%
Bracken	4	0%
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	698	33%
Coniferous Woodland	62	3%
Dwarf Shrub Heath	194	9%
Fen, Marsh and Swamp	84	4%
Improved and Semi-Improved Grassland	837	39%
Scrub	79	4%
Unimproved Grassland	51	2%
Total	2,143	

Living England 2022-2023 Primary Habitat Classification for NCC

The Priority Habitats Inventory provides a complementary national dataset maintained by Natural England. It maps habitats of principal importance for conserving or enhancing biodiversity under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Within Nottingham, it identifies 476.3 hectares of priority habitat, comprising 409 hectares of deciduous woodland, 33.6 hectares of good quality semi-improved grassland, 8.5 hectares of lowland fen and 1.6 hectares of traditional orchard. A further 23.5 hectares contain additional priority habitat features. The inventory can inform the comparison of Local Plan alternatives, identify potential risks of habitat loss or fragmentation, and help direct restoration and biodiversity net gain. It should be considered alongside the city-wide habitat baseline, site designations and evidence on habitat condition and connectivity.

Designated sites remain important components of Nottingham's ecological resource. The Council's 2025 Biodiversity Duty Report records 14 Local Nature Reserves covering 303 hectares and 52 Local Wildlife Sites covering approximately 697 hectares. Three Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Colwick Cutting, Holme Pit and Sellers Wood, are located within Local Nature Reserves. All 14 Local Nature Reserves and 31 of the 52 Local Wildlife Sites are recorded as being under positive conservation management. In addition to this, four sites that are not currently identified as having statutory or non-statutory status are also managed positively for conservation.

Complementary evidence is provided by the Open and Green Spaces Quality Audit, which identifies 492 open and green spaces covering approximately 2,472 hectares. Of these, 385 sites were visited and 344 were assessed in detail using criteria based on Green Flag Award themes. Approximately 1,215 hectares were classified as accessible open space, with a further 133 hectares comprising allotments, community gardens and urban farms. These figures are based on an open-space classification rather than habitat mapping and are therefore not directly comparable with the UKHab baseline or estimates of green and blue habitat coverage.

The audit assessed quality and value separately. Quality related primarily to condition, maintenance and management, while value reflected features, facilities and contribution to the local community. Although management can influence biodiversity outcomes through its effects on habitat condition, community value and ecological value are not equivalent. Sites with limited formal facilities may nonetheless support important habitats or ecological connections. The SEA should therefore distinguish clearly between habitat condition, ecological value, open-space quality and community use.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy should be considered alongside the habitat baseline when identifying priorities for habitat protection, restoration and connectivity. The LNRS identifies 1,922 hectares of land in the plan area (26% of NCC) that could be important for biodiversity (including a number of developed

urban areas). The SEA should assess the extent to which alternatives protect existing assets, strengthen ecological networks and direct habitat creation towards areas of fragmentation. It should also consider interactions with flood management, urban cooling, sustainable drainage, active travel and access to nature, while recognising that recreation pressure and artificial lighting can adversely affect sensitive habitats. Habitat gains should only be treated as deliverable where land, funding, establishment, management and monitoring arrangements are sufficiently secure.

The Council's 2025 draft biodiversity duty report records actions including the application of adopted planning policies, management of parks and nature reserves, ecological advice through the planning process, tree planting and management, habitat enhancement and partnership working. Mandatory biodiversity net gain requires most relevant development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value. From February 2024 to the end of 2025, two developments have been approved with Biodiversity Gain Plans (25/00167/PDS4 & 25/01052/PDS4). Nottingham City Council has also been investigating the potential of some of its landholdings to become a BNG unit provider.

The habitat assessment provides a point-in-time evidence base and is not expected to be repeated as the Local Plan progresses. Where appropriate, later stages of plan preparation should draw on more recent and regularly updated datasets. In particular, the Ordnance Survey National Geographic Database (OS NGD) is expected to become an important source of greenspace, land-cover and land-use information as the Council completes its migration to the dataset. OS NGD provides more detailed classifications and more frequent updates than the OS MasterMap Greenspace Layer, which Ordnance Survey will cease to maintain and publish after 31 March 2027. The suitability of OS NGD data for individual assessment purposes will need to be reviewed as part of this transition.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

Statutory protection, national policy, mandatory biodiversity net gain and the Council's biodiversity duty would continue to apply. Existing parks, reserves and wildlife sites would remain subject to their established management arrangements, and development could fund habitat creation through on-site or off-site delivery.

However, Nottingham's ecological resource extends beyond designated sites and is distributed across a fragmented urban network. Without an up-to-date Local Plan, there would be less opportunity to coordinate site allocations, biodiversity net gain, green infrastructure investment and Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities. Incremental losses of smaller habitats or ecological connections may be harder to identify and manage through individual applications.

Limited land availability may result in some biodiversity units being delivered outside the city where suitable local sites cannot be secured. This could meet project-level requirements but provide fewer direct benefits to Nottingham's ecological network and communities. Conversely, requiring all delivery within the city could increase costs or constrain development where suitable land is unavailable. A coordinated approach is needed to balance proximity, ecological value and deliverability.

Some vacant or underused land may continue to develop ecological value through natural succession. However, succession can also alter open mosaic or grassland habitats, and development pressure may isolate non-designated sites. The overall direction will depend on development patterns, management and the effectiveness and long-term maintenance of mitigation.

Population, housing and communities

Current baseline

This topic covers population and household change, housing supply, housing needs, student accommodation, deprivation and community needs. The Office for National Statistics estimates that 325,765 people lived in the Nottingham City Council area in mid-2025. This was 4,796 fewer than the revised 2024 estimate of 330,561, a fall of 1.5%, compared with population growth of 0.4% across England. This was Nottingham's first annual population decline since 2021 and appears to be its largest since at least the early 1990s. However, the city's population remained 4.0% higher than in 2015 and 14.4% higher than in 2005 (see Figures 2 and 3).

Annual population change has slowed and become more volatile since 2016, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2025 reduction is most likely to reflect lower international migration combined with continued movement from Nottingham to other parts of the United Kingdom, including the departure of graduates and other young adults. The contribution of each factor cannot yet be determined precisely. Measurement is also difficult in a university city with substantial annual movement into and out of the area. The 2025 figure is the official estimate, but the scale and persistence of the decline should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

Nottingham continues to have a distinctive and relatively young age structure, strongly influenced by its two universities. In 2025, 52,213 residents were aged 19 to 22, representing 16.0% of the city's population compared with 4.7% across England. This age group increased by 19.3% between 2015 and 2025, when it represented 14.0% of Nottingham's population. The concentration of residents at university ages has therefore become more pronounced, although this does not necessarily indicate longer-term retention of graduates or continuing growth in student accommodation demand.

The number of children aged under 17 remained broadly stable between 2015 and 2025, increasing by around 300 to 61,726. However, children declined slightly as a share of the population, from 19.6% to 18.9%. There has also been a marked shift within this age group. The number of children aged 0 to 4 fell by approximately 3,700, or 17.7%, while the population aged 11 to 16 increased by 4,194, or 22.9%. This is likely to reduce demand for early years and primary school places over time, while demand may remain stronger in secondary schools in the short term as the larger cohorts progress through the education system. Local development patterns, cross-boundary pupil movements and demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision mean that requirements will still need to be assessed below the city-wide level.

Nottingham remains younger than England overall, although its older population is increasing. In 2025, 37,164 residents were aged 66 or over, equivalent to 11.4% of the city's population compared with 18.0% across England. The number of older residents increased by 7.6% between 2015 and 2025, compared with 16.5% nationally. Within Nottingham, the population aged 66 to 78 increased by 13.5%, while the number aged 79 and over fell by 3.6%. The changing age structure is relevant to demand for accessible and adaptable homes, supported and extra-care accommodation, health and social-care services, accessible transport and neighbourhoods that enable residents to remain independent.

Nottingham also has a diverse population. According to Census 2021, 42.7% of residents identified with Black, Asian, Mixed or Other ethnic groups, compared with 34.6% in Census 2011. Population characteristics and needs vary across the city, and the effects of development may differ between communities. The SEA should therefore consider the distribution of environmental benefits and adverse effects, including access to suitable housing, employment, services, transport, open space and a healthy environment.

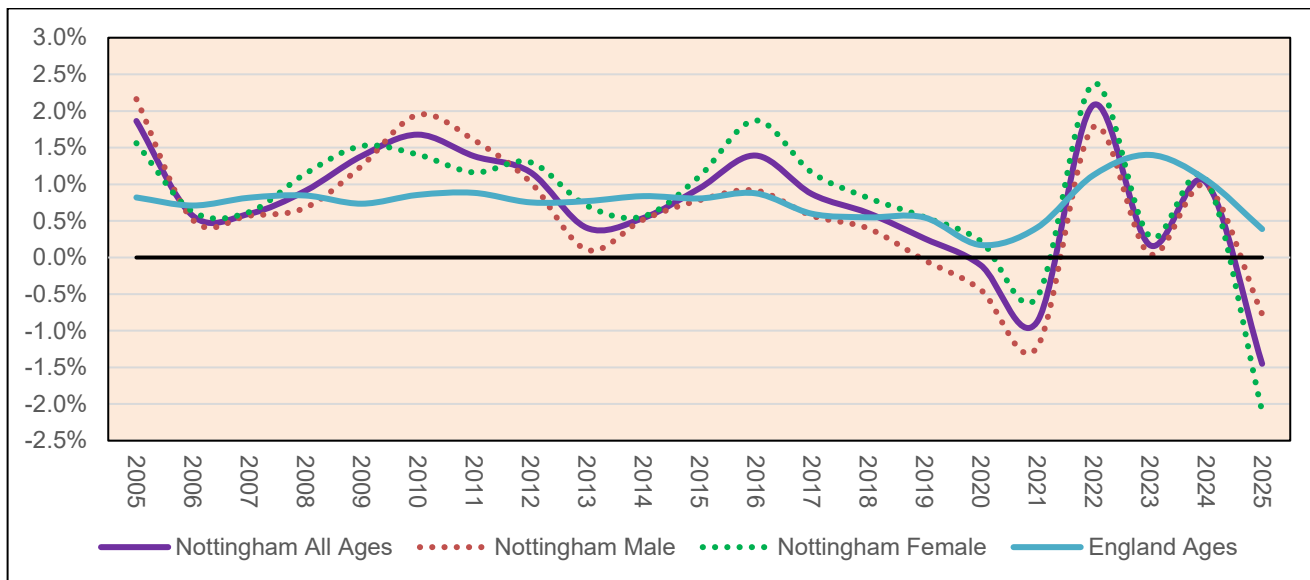


Figure 2. Nottingham and England Population Growth Rate (smoothed), 2005 to 2025.

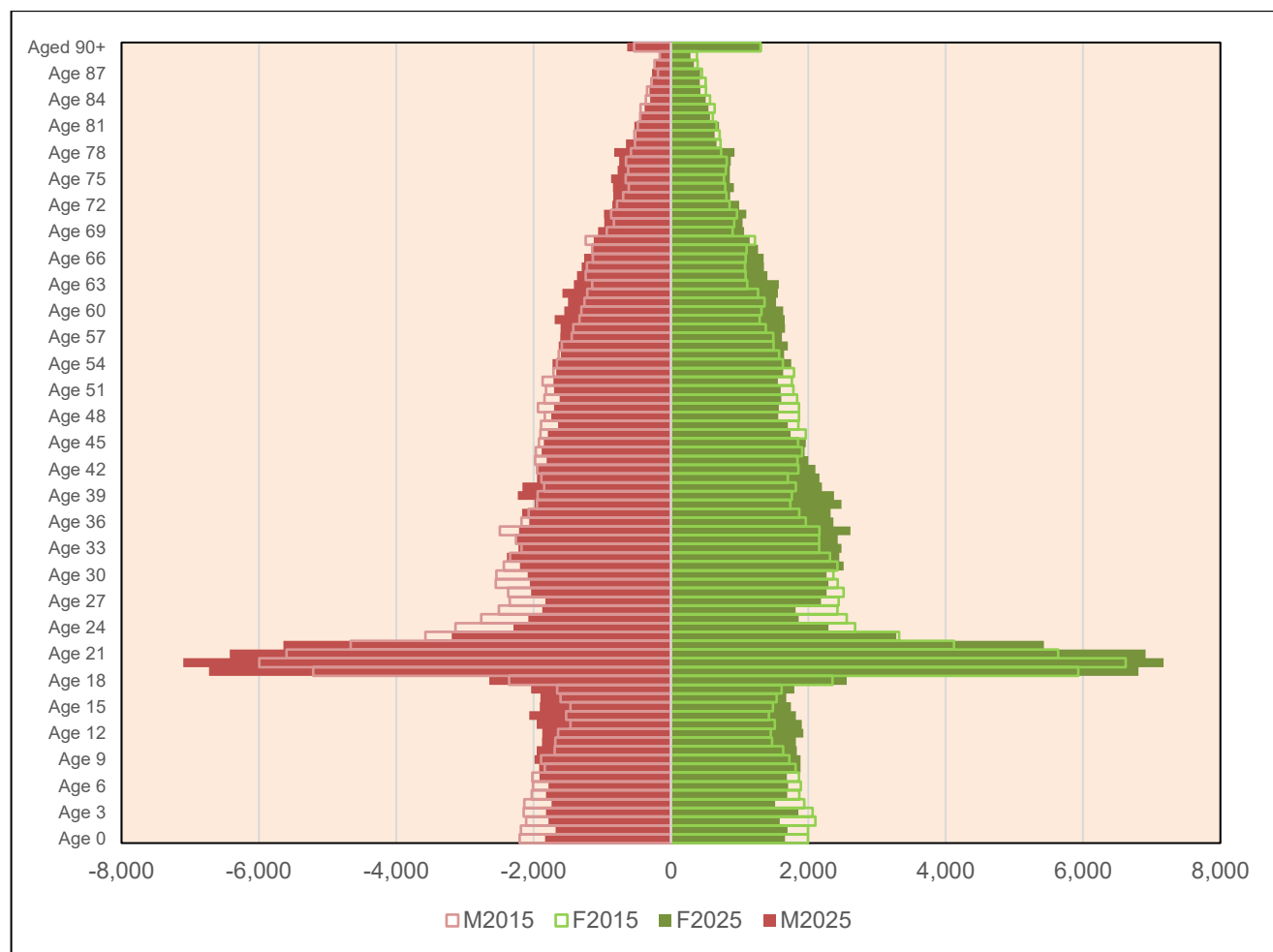


Figure 3. Population pyramid for Nottingham, 2015 and 2025.

Housing delivery has been strong in recent years. The Authority Monitoring Report records 1,905 net dwellings completed in 2024/25, including 602 non-student dwellings. Between 2011 and 2025, 18,274 net dwellings were completed. On 1 April 2025, the city had approximately 6.57 years of deliverable housing land supply, or 11.14 years when past over-delivery is considered. The emerging strategic plan proposes a Nottingham City housing requirement of 26,190 homes for 2023–2041, while the City Vision 2050 sets an ambition to exceed 27,000 new homes by 2041. These figures concern planned housing provision and should not be inferred directly from demographic projections.

Housing need is not limited to the overall number of homes. Census 2021 shows that Nottingham has a higher proportion of rented households than England as a whole. Around 24.1% of households occupy social rented homes and 29.4% occupy private rented homes, compared with England averages of 17.0% and 20.6% respectively. Overcrowding is also above the national average, while local housing-condition evidence estimates that 18.3% of homes were non-decent in 2023. Housing type, tenure, affordability, quality, accessibility and location are therefore important considerations alongside overall housing supply.

Purpose-built student accommodation is a distinctive planning issue. The number of purpose-built student bedspaces increased from 20,281 in 2015 to 36,334 in 2025. However, vacancy reached 12.7% in 2025/26, including a 16.1% vacancy rate for studios. Current monitoring no longer supports earlier assumptions of continued short-term growth in student numbers. Future purpose-built student accommodation, co-living and general housing proposals should therefore be assessed against current demand evidence and their effects on housing choice, neighbourhood balance, regeneration and the efficient use of land.

Population projections indicate a marked slowdown from previous growth, but are subject to substantial uncertainty. Projections are not forecasts or targets: they show what could happen if specified assumptions about births, deaths and migration were sustained. The Council has rebased the Office for National Statistics 2022-based variants to Nottingham's official 2025 population estimate. The migration-category variant, used as the central assumption, projects a population of approximately 326,656 in 2045. This represents growth of only 891 people, or 0.3%, from 2025, compared with growth of 4.0% during the preceding decade.

Migration has a particularly large effect on Nottingham's population because of international arrivals, its student population and continuing movement between the city and surrounding districts and other parts of the country. The rebased variants consequently produce a wide range of possible outcomes. By 2045, the ten-year migration variant reaches approximately 336,994 and the five-year migration variant approximately 331,701. The high-migration variant reaches approximately 359,010, an increase of 10.2%, while the low-migration variant falls to approximately 299,602, a reduction of 8.0%. The high-migration outcome would require a sustained return to substantially stronger migration and is better treated as a sensitivity test than as the central expectation. Current evidence points towards broad population stability, with a material risk of lower growth if international migration weakens or outward internal migration increases.

The age structure is projected to change more substantially than the total population. Under the migration-category variant, the number of children and teenagers aged 0 to 18 falls by around 14% between 2025 and 2045. The population aged 19 to 20 falls by around 7%, while the number aged 21 to 40 falls by around 5%. These reductions are offset by growth of approximately 10% among residents aged 41 to 65 and 29% among those aged 66 and over. Nottingham is therefore expected to remain a relatively young city, but older residents would form a larger share of its population. This implies changing rather than uniformly increasing demand for housing, education, health, social care, transport and community infrastructure.

Household growth may be more significant than population growth because average household size can fall as the population ages and more people live alone or in couples without children. Under the migration-category household variant, the number of households increases from 129,889 in 2025 to 141,147 in 2045 (see Figure 4). This is an increase of 11,258 households, or 8.7%, despite population growth of only 0.3%. The contrast suggests continued demand for housing, particularly smaller, accessible and adaptable homes, even if the overall population remains close to its present level. A wider supply of suitable housing for older residents could also enable some larger homes to become available to families.

Household projections are also sensitive to migration and assumptions about household formation (see Figure 4). Under the low international migration household variant, household numbers remain broadly stable, falling slightly from 130,881 in 2025 to 130,738 in 2045. Under the high international migration variant, they increase from 131,288 to 155,737, or by 18.6%. The central and lower variants therefore indicate outcomes ranging from broadly stable household numbers to growth of 8.7%, while the higher variant provides a sensitivity test for substantially stronger demand. Household projections should be treated with greater caution than population estimates because they depend on additional assumptions and exclude people living in communal establishments, including university halls, care homes, prisons and some hostels.

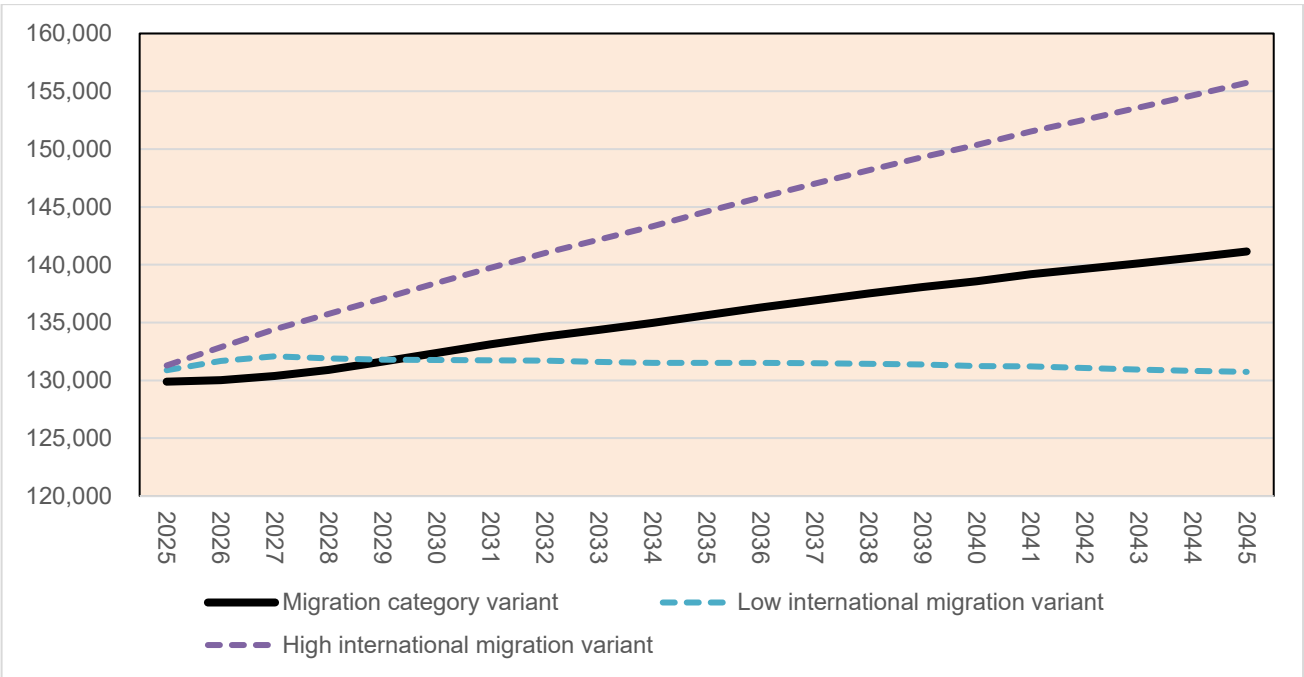


Figure 4. Projected households under selected variants, 2025 to 2045 (rebased).

The projections provide an evidence-based indication of demographic direction and uncertainty, but do not determine the Local Plan’s housing requirement or establish the amount of development that should be planned. Housing requirements are informed by the applicable national policy and plan-making method, together with housing needs, economic objectives, deliverability and cross-boundary relationships. For SEA purposes, the projections should be used to test how reasonable alternatives perform under changing household and age structures and under credible higher- and lower-growth scenarios. The assessment should consider the implications for housing mix, land use, transport, infrastructure, accessibility and community services, rather than using total population change as a proxy for housing need.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

Nottingham's total population is currently projected to remain broadly stable over the plan period, but this projection is sensitive to migration assumptions and should be treated as uncertain. More material changes are expected in the population's age and household structure. The number of children and younger adults is projected to decline, while the number of older residents and smaller households is expected to increase. Household growth is therefore likely to continue, albeit at low levels, even if population growth remains limited.

Development would continue to be managed through existing plans and national policy. Housing delivery would also continue through existing permissions, allocations, windfall sites and regeneration proposals. However, existing policies would become progressively less aligned with updated evidence on household growth, population ageing, accessibility requirements, student accommodation and the changing needs of different neighbourhoods.

Without an up-to-date Local Plan, there would be less ability to coordinate the amount, type, tenure and location of housing with demographic and household change. This could result in a mismatch between the homes delivered and the need for affordable, family, accessible, adaptable, specialist and smaller homes. There would also be less ability to plan for supported and extra-care accommodation or to provide a range of housing that enables older and disabled residents to remain within their existing communities.

Health, education, social-care and community infrastructure would continue to be planned by the relevant providers. However, the ability to align new development with infrastructure capacity, funding and delivery would be weaker. Reduced numbers of children may lower aggregate demand for mainstream school places, but cross-boundary pupil movements, local development patterns and increasing demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision mean that requirements would still need to be monitored. Growth in the older population is likely to place increasing pressure on health, social-care and accessible transport provision.

Existing planning policies would continue to influence purpose-built student accommodation and other specialist forms of housing. However, without a new Local Plan there would be less ability to respond comprehensively to changing student numbers, vacancy rates and accommodation models. Decisions could become more dependent on individual proposals, increasing the risk of over-provision, unsuitable concentrations or the inefficient use of land that could meet other housing and community needs.

Human health and wellbeing

Current baseline

This topic covers physical and mental health, health inequalities, safety, access to services, active lifestyles and the wider determinants of health. Planning cannot directly control health outcomes, but it can influence housing, employment, transport, air quality, noise, food environments, climate resilience, community facilities and opportunities for social interaction.

Public health indicators show that health outcomes in Nottingham are generally poorer than national averages and that significant inequalities persist across the city. Life expectancy at birth for 2023-2025 was 76.6 years for males and 80.8 years for females, compared with England averages of 79.7 and 83.5 years respectively. Premature mortality rates are substantially higher than national averages, including mortality from all causes, cardiovascular disease and cancer among people aged under 75. Nottingham also experiences higher levels of deprivation, child poverty, smoking and obesity than England as a whole, all of which are associated with poorer long-term health outcomes.

Within the city, ONS healthy life expectancy estimates show marked variation between neighbourhoods, with differences of almost 20 years between the healthiest and least healthy Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs). The city also records an approximately eight-year gap in life expectancy between the most and least affluent communities. Together, these indicators suggest that health inequalities in Nottingham are strongly influenced by wider social, economic and environmental determinants, including income, employment, housing conditions, education and access to healthy living opportunities.

Nottingham experiences high levels of deprivation relative to England. Around 33.7% of children live in relative low-income households compared with 19.8% nationally, and the city has a substantially higher deprivation score than both the East Midlands and England. Health inequalities are therefore closely linked to wider social and economic inequalities. Lower-income households may have fewer opportunities to avoid environmental harm, afford healthy lifestyles or adapt to rising housing, transport and energy costs.

Health effects vary according to age, disability, income, ethnicity and existing health conditions. Children, older people and people with long-term health conditions may be more sensitive to air pollution, overheating, poor housing and barriers to services. The SEA should therefore consider who is affected, where effects occur and whether options reduce or reinforce inequalities.

Nottingham's health profile demonstrates the importance of prevention. Premature mortality remains significantly above national averages, including mortality from all causes, cardiovascular disease and cancer before age 75. Smoking prevalence remains above the England average, particularly among routine and manual occupations and during pregnancy. Adult overweight and obesity levels are also above national rates, while Year 6 obesity remains a significant concern. These factors contribute to long-term health conditions and reduced healthy life expectancy.

Mental wellbeing is relevant to the Local Plan. Housing and neighbourhood quality, financial security, noise, access to services, social isolation, safety and community facilities can influence wellbeing and perceptions of quality of life. Nottingham records above-average rates of homelessness and relatively high rates of hospital admissions related to violence, indicating that social and environmental conditions can affect wellbeing as well as physical health. Planning should consider these pathways while avoiding claims that particular interventions directly produce specific clinical outcomes.

Physical activity is influenced by the design of places. Compact, mixed-use neighbourhoods with safe walking and cycling routes, accessible public transport and nearby services can make everyday activity easier. The presence of infrastructure does not itself establish that it is safe, attractive or accessible. Route quality, severance, traffic, gradients, lighting, maintenance and the needs of disabled people remain important considerations.

Open spaces contribute to recreation, contact with nature, active lifestyles and mental wellbeing. The Open and Green Spaces Quality Audit identifies 492 open and green spaces covering approximately 2,472 hectares, with around 1,215 hectares assessed as accessible. While access to larger destination parks is generally good, some neighbourhoods experience lower levels of provision or more limited accessibility because of barriers such as major roads, railways or waterways. Access to open space remains relevant to health and wellbeing, although detailed consideration of green infrastructure is addressed elsewhere in this report.

Housing is a major determinant of health. Poor-quality, overcrowded, insecure or unaffordable housing can affect both physical and mental wellbeing. Modelled estimates from the English Housing Survey indicate that 18.3% of homes in Nottingham were non-decent in 2023, while Census 2021 data show levels of overcrowding above the England average. Demographic evidence also indicates an ageing population and growth in smaller households. These trends are likely to increase demand for accessible and adaptable

homes, specialist accommodation and neighbourhoods that support independent living. Housing quality, suitability and accessibility are therefore important considerations alongside overall housing supply.

Air pollution, noise and traffic can affect health directly and may discourage walking, cycling and outdoor activity. Exposure varies according to roads, traffic volumes, building form and the location of sensitive uses. Climate change adds risks from overheating, intense rainfall and flooding, particularly for older people, children and people with existing health conditions. Urban greening, shade, sustainable drainage, building design and resilient infrastructure can help reduce these risks where appropriately located and maintained.

The Local Plan should also consider healthy food environments, community safety, inclusive design and access to health, education and community facilities. The SEA should work alongside Health Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment, sharing evidence where appropriate but retaining a focus on the likely significant effects of the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

Health inequalities are likely to persist without wider action because they arise from interconnected social, economic and environmental factors. Existing public health programmes, healthcare services, national planning policy and current Local Plan policies would continue to influence development. However, these arrangements would not provide an updated city-wide framework linking growth, housing quality, accessibility, active travel, climate resilience and community infrastructure.

Without an up-to-date Local Plan, opportunities to direct development towards accessible locations and coordinate it with walking, cycling and public transport investment may be reduced. Development could still deliver local improvements, but delivery may be more fragmented, and cumulative effects on traffic, air quality, neighbourhood quality and service demand may be more difficult to manage.

The city's existing pattern of health inequality could become further embedded. Areas already experiencing poorer health outcomes are also more likely to experience higher levels of deprivation, overcrowding, lower-quality housing and environmental disadvantage. Without a coordinated spatial strategy, there may be fewer opportunities to align regeneration, housing growth, infrastructure investment and health objectives in those neighbourhoods where the need is greatest.

Access to open space, recreation opportunities and community facilities would continue to provide health and wellbeing benefits, but existing inequalities in accessibility and quality may remain. A site-by-site approach may be less effective in addressing neighbourhoods experiencing multiple and cumulative disadvantages.

Housing standards and national requirements would continue to apply. However, existing local policies may become less responsive to evidence relating to housing condition, affordability, overcrowding, population ageing and accessibility needs. This could increase the risk of a mismatch between the homes delivered and the needs of residents, with associated implications for health and wellbeing.

Climate-related health risks are also likely to increase over the plan period. Without a coordinated planning response, opportunities to provide heat-resilient neighbourhoods, sustainable drainage, flood resilience and adaptation measures may be missed. These effects may be greatest in more densely developed and deprived areas, where residents often experience poorer health outcomes and have fewer resources available to adapt to environmental change.

Soil, land and natural resources

Current baseline

This topic covers the efficient use of land and buildings, soil, contamination, ground conditions, minerals, materials and waste. Nottingham's tightly drawn boundary and predominantly urban character make land a constrained resource. Development has therefore relied heavily on previously developed land, conversion of buildings and increased density.

The Authority Monitoring Report records that 97.8% of new-build and converted dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on previously developed land. Between 2011 and 2025, 96.5% of new dwellings were delivered on previously developed land. This supports efficient land use and can reduce pressure on undeveloped land, but previously developed land is not a uniform resource.

Nottingham's industrial and transport history has left sites with different combinations of contamination, made ground, former structures, utilities, archaeology and geotechnical constraints. These can increase investigation, remediation and construction costs and affect viability and phasing. Redevelopment can create positive effects by remediating land, but can also mobilise contaminants if excavation, drainage and material handling are not controlled.

The city-wide habitat evidence shows that previously developed land can support grassland, scrub, woodland, wetland and open mosaic habitats. Basford Junction, Sneinton Railway Lands, Beeston Sidings, King's Meadow Grassland and disused railway corridors illustrate this. Brownfield status should therefore be treated as an indicator of former use, not as a measure of current ecological value.

Efficient land use also includes reuse and adaptation of buildings. Reuse can reduce demolition waste, demand for materials and embodied carbon and support heritage regeneration. It will not always be feasible, because buildings may have structural, accessibility, contamination or energy constraints. The SEA should assess reuse proportionately and should not assume that either retention or redevelopment is always preferable.

Higher density can use land efficiently and support public transport, but poorly designed density can reduce space for trees, sustainable drainage, biodiversity and recreation and affect daylight, overheating, townscape and amenity. Land-use efficiency should therefore be assessed alongside liveability, infrastructure and environmental capacity.

Soils perform functions including carbon storage, vegetation support, water filtration and runoff reduction. Construction can result in sealing, compaction, contamination or loss, while redevelopment can provide opportunities for remediation, de-sealing and creation of functional soils. Where development affects undeveloped land, soil quality, agricultural function, drainage, carbon storage and habitat value should be considered.

Development requires aggregates and other materials and generates excavation, demolition and construction waste. Effects depend on development form, demolition, remediation and opportunities to reuse buildings and materials. The adopted Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan provides the waste planning framework to 2038. The Local Plan will avoid conflict with waste infrastructure and support prevention, reuse and circular-economy principles where planning can influence them. Minerals planning will be progressed separately, but potential conflicts with resources and infrastructure remain relevant.

The percentage of development on previously developed land should not be treated as a complete measure of environmental performance. Brownfield redevelopment can support regeneration, remediation and land efficiency but may also affect habitat, heritage, flood risk or require resource-intensive remediation. The assessment should identify these relationships rather than assume that brownfield development is automatically sustainable.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

National planning policy would continue to support the efficient use of land and the reuse of suitable previously developed sites. Existing Local Plan policies and development-management processes would continue to address contamination, land stability, waste, minerals and environmental protection. The adopted Waste Local Plan would remain the principal planning framework for waste development and capacity.

Nottingham would probably remain strongly reliant on brownfield development because of its tightly drawn boundary and established development pattern. However, complex sites may remain vacant or underused where contamination, infrastructure, flood risk, land assembly or viability constraints prevent delivery. More readily developable sites could come forward first, leaving some of the most constrained sites without a coordinated route to remediation and redevelopment.

Without an up-to-date Local Plan, there would be less ability to establish a city-wide approach to land efficiency, regeneration priorities, appropriate density, building reuse and infrastructure delivery. Decisions would be more dependent on individual proposals, making it harder to compare the environmental and delivery implications of different locations or to coordinate development across larger regeneration areas.

Contamination would continue to be managed mainly through the planning process. However, remediation would depend on sites coming forward for development and being financially deliverable. Land that is not redeveloped may remain in its existing condition, while piecemeal development could make comprehensive investigation or remediation more difficult. Opportunities to combine remediation with habitat enhancement, sustainable drainage and improved public access could also be missed.

Existing statutory protection and biodiversity net gain requirements would continue to apply to brownfield habitats. Nevertheless, cumulative losses of smaller, non-designated habitats and ecological connections may be harder to identify or manage through individual planning applications. Conversely, some vacant land may continue to develop ecological value through natural succession, although this may alter or reduce the value of habitats that depend on open, disturbed conditions.

Waste and minerals would remain subject to their separate planning and regulatory frameworks. Development would continue to generate demand for construction materials and produce demolition, excavation and construction waste. Without updated local policies on building reuse, resource efficiency and site design, opportunities to reduce material use, enable reuse and support circular-economy approaches may be applied inconsistently.

Water and flood risk

Current baseline

This topic covers flooding from rivers, surface water, groundwater, sewers, canals, reservoirs and other sources, together with water quality, water resources, wastewater, drainage and blue infrastructure. Nottingham's principal water features include the River Trent, River Leen, Day Brook, Tottle Brook, Nottingham and Beeston Canal, other ordinary watercourses, lakes, ponds and wetlands. These features provide habitats, landscape and recreational value, movement corridors, floodplain storage and opportunities for climate adaptation. They can also constrain where and how development takes place.

The River Trent is the city's principal main river and one of its most significant environmental and spatial features. Its floodplain extends through southern Nottingham and includes existing communities, infrastructure, employment land, open space and major regeneration areas. The Waterside area and sites close to the Trent and canal corridors therefore require particular attention to flood risk, safe access, drainage, land raising, residual risk and the maintenance of floodplain functions.

The River Leen passes through the north and west of the city before joining the Trent. It provides an important ecological and blue-infrastructure corridor but also creates fluvial and surface-water flood risks in parts of Bulwell, Basford and the Leen Valley. The city-wide habitat baseline identifies approximately 5.8 hectares of priority river habitat associated with the Leen across several wards. Development affecting the corridor may influence flood conveyance, habitat condition and ecological connectivity.

The Day Brook is a locally important ordinary watercourse and blue-green infrastructure corridor. It is relevant to potential development sites within its catchment and has links with the wider River Leen catchment and emerging River Leen Strategy work. Development affecting the Day Brook or its corridor may influence flood conveyance, surface-water drainage, water quality, habitat condition and ecological connectivity, and may also provide opportunities for restoration and improved blue-green infrastructure. The Tottle Brook is also locally relevant, particularly in light of recent flooding, although fewer potential development sites are expected to be affected. Where sites fall within either catchment, the assessment should use available flood records and mapping and identify where more detailed flood-risk, drainage or ecological evidence is required.

The November 2025 Flood Modelling and Sequential Test Update provides the latest position. The Environment Agency is updating the River Trent model between the River Derwent and Newark, with modelling expected during summer 2026 and results likely in late 2026 or 2027. River Leen modelling is also being reviewed through the Hillside and Leen Strategy projects, with updates expected during 2026. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should therefore be reviewed when these outputs are available. Until then, Local Plan assessment should use the best available evidence but record model age, coverage and uncertainty explicitly.

The 2025 update also demonstrates that flood risk is relevant to strategic regeneration. At Broad Marsh, land around Melville Street falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3, although it benefits from the Left Bank Flood Alleviation Scheme. The strategic-plan assessment concluded that the sequential and exception tests were engaged and that masterplanning and a stage 2 flood-risk assessment should determine the distribution and vulnerability of uses. This illustrates the need to consider defence dependency, breach or overtopping, safe access and residual risk, rather than treating defended land as risk free.

The definition of functional floodplain has also changed. Current guidance uses the 3.3% annual probability river or sea flood event, equivalent to a 1 in 30 annual chance, as the starting point for identifying Flood Zone 3b, alongside water-storage areas and local evidence. This differs from the former 5% or 1 in 20 event and may change the extent treated as functional floodplain. Where existing mapping does not reflect the revised definition, the assessment should identify the limitation and seek proportionate site-specific evidence.

Climate change is expected to increase flood risk through higher peak river flows and more intense rainfall. For the Lower Trent and Erewash management catchment, current allowances indicate potential increases in peak river flow by the 2080s of 29% under the central allowance, 39% under the higher-central allowance and 62% under the upper-end allowance. The allowance applied will depend on development vulnerability, location and lifetime. Land outside present-day high-risk zones may therefore become more vulnerable, while defended areas may remain exposed to residual risk.

Surface-water flooding is particularly relevant because Nottingham has a dense built form and extensive impermeable surfaces. Roads, roofs and other sealed areas reduce infiltration and can increase the speed and volume of runoff entering drains and watercourses. Local topography, culverts, drainage capacity, blockages and interactions between drainage systems can concentrate flows in established neighbourhoods. The Council has undertaken formal investigations in locations including Strelley, Bulwell,

Top Valley, Sherwood, Wollaton West, Lenton and Wollaton East, Old Basford and Clifton West, including investigations following Storm Babet and Storm Henk.

The Council published an updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in October 2025. It replaces the previous strategy and sets a six-year approach based on prevention, protection, resilience and recovery. As Lead Local Flood Authority, the Council manages and investigates risks from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses, maintains a register of significant flood-risk assets and advises on surface-water management for major development. The Strategy also recognises the roles of the Environment Agency for main rivers and reservoirs and Severn Trent for the public sewer network.

The Strategy gives greater emphasis to improved evidence, asset management, community resilience, flood monitoring, nature-based solutions and the prioritisation of investment towards the most vulnerable communities and infrastructure. It also seeks robust sustainable drainage proposals and the integration of blue-green infrastructure in development. These measures are relevant to the SEA, but their delivery depends on staff capacity, capital and maintenance funding, partnership working and the availability of land.

Sustainable drainage systems can manage rainfall closer to where it falls and reduces the rate and volume of surface-water discharge. Measures may include permeable surfaces, rain gardens, swales, basins, ponds, wetlands, green roofs and water storage. Well-designed systems can also improve water quality, biodiversity, cooling, landscape and amenity. Their effectiveness depends on site conditions, design, construction, adoption, inspection and long-term maintenance. Sustainable drainage should therefore be treated as infrastructure with a defined management arrangement and performance standard.

The water-cycle evidence has also been updated. The Greater Nottingham Water Cycle Study, April 2024, replaces the 2010 study and considers water supply, groundwater, abstraction, water quality, wastewater and flooding against planned growth to 2041. It draws on Severn Trent's water-resource and drainage and wastewater management plans and Environment Agency evidence. Its purpose is to identify environmental and infrastructure constraints and ensure that growth is aligned with clean-water supply, wastewater treatment, flood management and water-quality objectives.

Water availability is not unlimited. The wider Water Resources West area currently has a surplus at regional level but is expected to face future pressures. The regional approach includes reducing leakage, helping customers reduce demand, protecting catchments and developing new sources or transfers where required. The Local Plan should support water efficiency and ensure that development assumptions are reflected in water-company planning. A regional surplus should not be interpreted as confirmation that every site can be served without local network reinforcement.

Wastewater treatment and sewer capacity require similar caution. The scale, location and timing of growth can create cumulative demand that is not apparent from individual applications. The GNSP November 2025 Infrastructure Delivery Plan Addendum updates information from Severn Trent on water supply and treatment infrastructure. The Environmental Report should distinguish existing capacity, programmed investment and reinforcement that remains dependent on developer funding, regulatory approval or future agreement. Where capacity or timing is uncertain, phasing conditions or infrastructure triggers may be needed.

Water quality is closely connected to land use, drainage and development. Construction runoff, contaminated land, road pollution, misconnections, sewer overflows and changes to riverbanks can affect rivers, canals, ponds and groundwater. The Water Cycle Study identifies the prevention of deterioration and achievement of good ecological and chemical status as central objectives. Sustainable drainage and naturalised river corridors can reduce some effects but do not remove the need to control pollution at source.

Nottingham contains two principal aquifers, and its industrial legacy creates potential links between contaminated land and groundwater. Redevelopment can mobilise contamination where excavation, piling or drainage is not properly managed. Conversely, investigation and remediation can reduce existing risks.

The SEA should identify strategic relationships between land contamination and water quality while recognising that reliable conclusions will normally require site-specific hydrogeological and land-quality evidence.

Blue infrastructure has functions beyond flood management. The Trent, Leen, canals, wetlands, ponds and other water features support biodiversity, movement, recreation, townscape and urban cooling. Development can enhance these functions through river restoration, naturalised banks, habitat creation and improved connections. Increased access, lighting or disturbance may, however, be inappropriate in ecologically sensitive locations. Multifunctional benefits should therefore be assessed alongside ecological capacity and secure long-term management.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

National flood-risk policy, updated Environment Agency mapping, regulation and the responsibilities of the Lead Local Flood Authority would continue to apply. Site-specific flood-risk assessments and sustainable drainage strategies would continue to manage individual proposals. The 2025 Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and action plan would also guide Council and partner activity.

Updated River Trent and River Leen modelling is expected to improve the evidence base during 2026 and 2027. However, without an updated Local Plan there would be less ability to use that evidence consistently across the full range of development options, revise strategic allocations or safeguard land for catchment-scale measures. Individual applications may respond to updated modelling at different times, producing an uneven approach.

Climate change would continue to increase river and surface-water risk, placing greater pressure on drainage, flood defences and emergency arrangements. Existing development and infrastructure would remain exposed in some locations even without additional growth. Investment through the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and other programmes may reduce risk locally, but delivery would remain dependent on prioritisation, funding, land and partnership capacity.

Development would continue through existing allocations, permissions and windfall sites. Site-specific controls could prevent unacceptable effects, but they would be less effective at addressing cumulative runoff, sewer and wastewater demand, loss of flood storage or opportunities for connected blue-green infrastructure across several sites. Major regeneration areas close to the Trent, Leen and canal corridors would continue to present both significant opportunities and material residual risks.

Water-company investment and regulatory controls would continue to support water supply, wastewater treatment and water quality. However, infrastructure programmes may not align fully with the location and timing of development under an older spatial framework. Where growth proceeds ahead of reinforcement, there would be a greater risk of delayed development, sewer flooding or pressure on receiving waters.

The likely direction is therefore increasing climate-related risk combined with gradual improvement in modelling, mapping and risk-management practice. Without a coordinated Local Plan, the main weakness would be reduced ability to compare alternatives, align development with infrastructure investment and secure strategic drainage, river restoration, flood storage and blue-green networks.

Air quality and pollution (including light and noise)

Current baseline

This topic covers outdoor air quality, noise, vibration, light, odour, land contamination and other forms of pollution that can affect human health, biodiversity, water, amenity and the use of land. The significance of pollution depends on the source, pathway and receptor. Planning can influence both emissions and exposure through the location and design of development, transport choices, the relationship between uses and the mitigation secured through policies and site allocations.

Nottingham has an Air Quality Management Area for nitrogen dioxide. The principal local sources of nitrogen dioxide are road vehicles and natural-gas-fired heating, hot-water systems and boilers in domestic, commercial and industrial premises. The main local contributors to particulate pollution include diesel vehicles, tyre, brake and road-surface wear, and the burning of solid fuels such as wood and coal-based smokeless fuels.

A substantial proportion of fine particulate matter originates outside the Nottingham City administrative area and the wider conurbation. Some particles are transported over longer distances, while secondary particles form through atmospheric reactions involving pollutants such as ammonia, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. The Local Plan can influence local sources and population exposure but cannot control all particulate concentrations within the city.

The Council's 2025 Annual Status Report presents monitoring undertaken during 2024. Its three real-time analysers and the Defra monitoring stations at Clinton Street East and Western Boulevard recorded annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations below the statutory objective of 40 micrograms per cubic metre. The Council's network of 50 diffusion tubes at 38 locations also recorded bias-adjusted and annualised concentrations below that objective.

Particulate monitoring at the Defra stations recorded annual mean PM10 concentrations below the objective of 40 micrograms per cubic metre. Recorded PM2.5 concentrations were also below the national 2040 annual mean concentration target of 10 micrograms per cubic metre. These results indicate that monitored concentrations met the applicable objectives and target during 2024. They do not establish that air pollution presents no health risk, that exposure is uniform across the city or that future development would have no significant effect.

Air quality has improved over recent decades, and measures including cleaner buses and taxis, public transport investment and changes to vehicle emissions have contributed to lower nitrogen dioxide concentrations. A principal element of Nottingham's earlier air-quality plan involved retrofitting approximately 185 Euro V buses with nitrogen dioxide abatement technology and accelerating the introduction of lower-emission biogas buses. This work was substantially completed by February 2020.

Despite this improvement, there is no clear threshold below which all health effects of air pollution disappear. Air pollution can contribute to cardiovascular and respiratory disease, cancer, reduced lung function, asthma, hospital admissions and premature mortality. Children, older people and people with existing heart or lung conditions may be particularly sensitive. Lower-income communities can also experience greater exposure or have fewer resources to avoid or respond to environmental harms.

The SEA should consider emissions and exposure separately. A development option may have a limited effect on city-wide pollutant concentrations but could increase the number of people exposed by locating housing, schools, health facilities or other sensitive uses close to a busy road or combustion source. Conversely, locating development in accessible urban areas may reduce car travel but expose residents to existing roadside pollution. These trade-offs should be recorded rather than assuming that accessibility produces an automatic air-quality benefit.

Road transport remains an important planning influence on air quality. Nottingham has a strong public transport network, including buses, trams and rail, and the Authority Monitoring Report records 71.32 million bus and tram passenger journeys in 2024/25, including 14.88 million tram journeys. However, development can still increase traffic, freight, servicing, parking demand and construction movements. The effect will depend on the amount and location of development, trip generation, mode share, vehicle technology and the capacity of the transport network.

The transition to lower-emission and electric vehicles is expected to reduce exhaust emissions over time. It will not remove particulate matter from tyre, brake and road wear, congestion, severance or the land required for roads and parking. Air-quality assessment should therefore not assume that vehicle electrification will remove all transport-related effects. Measures that reduce the need to travel and support public transport, walking and cycling remain relevant.

Building energy systems can also affect local air quality. Gas boilers, combined heat and power systems, backup generators and solid-fuel heating can emit nitrogen oxides or particulate matter. Heat networks and low-carbon energy infrastructure may reduce emissions where they replace more polluting sources, but effects depend on the technology, fuel, operating pattern and location of emission points. Policies should consider air quality alongside carbon reduction and should avoid assuming that all low-carbon technologies produce equivalent local air-quality outcomes.

Construction can create temporary effects from dust, machinery, vehicle movements, noise, vibration and the disturbance of contaminated material. Effects may be significant where large regeneration areas are developed over an extended period or where several sites are constructed at the same time. These effects can usually be reduced through construction environmental management, routing, working-hour controls and dust suppression, but the SEA should consider cumulative construction effects and the degree of certainty that mitigation will be secured.

Noise is associated with roads, railways, trams, industrial and commercial activities, construction, entertainment uses and the night-time economy. Noise can affect health, sleep, learning, amenity and the use of outdoor space. It can also constrain the relationship between housing and employment, cultural or transport uses. The agent-of-change principle and good acoustic design can reduce conflict, but mitigation should not rely solely on sealed windows where this would create overheating, ventilation or liveability problems.

Some development options may involve a tension between efficient land use and exposure to noise. Higher-density development around stations, corridors and centres can support public transport and reduce travel demand, but these locations may also experience road, rail or commercial noise. The SEA should assess whether the intended use is compatible with the location and whether a satisfactory internal and external environment can be achieved without undermining ventilation, cooling or access to usable outdoor space.

Artificial light can affect residential amenity, wildlife and the character of places. Effects are likely to be most significant close to homes, waterways, woodland edges, bat corridors and other sensitive habitats. Lighting may support safety and accessibility, but excessive or poorly directed lighting can disturb species and alter dark corridors. The assessment should consider the location, intensity, timing and direction of lighting rather than treating all illumination as equivalent.

Odour, dust and other emissions may arise from industrial processes, waste facilities, commercial uses, transport infrastructure and some energy systems. The relevant regulatory regimes would continue to control permitted activities, but planning should avoid locating sensitive uses where existing emissions would create unacceptable conditions or constrain established operations. This is particularly relevant where regeneration introduces housing into mixed industrial or employment areas.

Pollution pathways interact. For example, compact development near transport corridors can reduce car dependency but increase exposure to air pollution and noise. Opening windows to manage overheating can increase internal noise exposure, while sealed façades can increase reliance on mechanical cooling. Lighting designed to improve perceived safety can affect wildlife corridors. The SEA should identify these relationships and avoid assessing each pollution type in isolation where the trade-off is material.

The Local Plan can influence air quality and pollution through the spatial distribution of development, transport policies, parking, freight, green infrastructure, energy systems, land-use compatibility and site-specific requirements. It cannot control all regional pollution sources or replace environmental permitting and statutory nuisance regimes. The assessment should focus on effects that can reasonably be influenced through plan-making.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

Air quality is likely to continue to improve in some respects as vehicle and energy technologies become cleaner and national emissions controls take effect. Existing transport programmes and local air-quality measures would also continue. However, improvement is not certain at every location, and growth in traffic, freight, energy use or construction could offset some benefits.

Existing monitoring indicates that the statutory annual mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide and PM10 and the 2040 PM2.5 concentration target were met at the monitored locations in 2024. Continued compliance will depend on future emissions, traffic patterns, energy systems and development. Monitoring locations also cannot represent exposure at every property or sensitive use.

Without an updated Local Plan, development would continue under existing policies and national guidance. Project-level air-quality, noise, lighting, contamination and construction controls would remain available. However, there would be less ability to coordinate the location of growth with transport investment or to assess cumulative exposure across multiple development sites.

Accessible urban locations would continue to attract development, but some are close to busy roads, railways, commercial activities and the night-time economy. Without an updated spatial and design framework, conflicts between efficient land use, housing delivery, established uses, noise and air quality could be addressed mainly through individual applications rather than through strategic avoidance and mitigation.

The electrification of vehicles and changes to heating systems are likely to reduce some combustion emissions. Non-exhaust particulate matter, construction dust, noise, vibration and other pollution sources would remain. A narrow focus on vehicle exhaust emissions could therefore understate the continuing environmental effects of transport and development.

Brownfield regeneration would continue to create opportunities to investigate and remediate contaminated land. However, remediation would depend on sites coming forward and remaining viable. Vacant or underused land may remain in its existing condition, while piecemeal redevelopment could make comprehensive mitigation more difficult.

Climatic factors

Current baseline

This topic covers greenhouse gas emissions, energy demand and heat decarbonisation, building performance and reuse, climate adaptation, overheating, flood resilience and nature-based solutions. These matters interact. Compact development can support public transport and low-carbon heat networks, but poorly designed intensification can increase overheating, reduce permeable surfaces and place pressure on green infrastructure.

Nottingham City Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and adopted the Carbon Neutral Nottingham 2028 ambition. The Local Plan cannot control all emissions or replace Building Regulations, energy policy and retrofit programmes. It can, however, influence development location and form, transport choices, building reuse, low-carbon energy opportunities and climate-resilient design.

The latest Department for Energy Security and Net Zero dataset shows that Nottingham's territorial greenhouse gas emissions fell from approximately 2.296 million tonnes CO₂e in 2005 to 1.100 million tonnes in 2024, a reduction of around 52%. Per-capita emissions fell by approximately 59%, from 8.06 to 3.32 tonnes. The data cover carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide but exclude some sources that cannot be allocated reliably at local level and do not represent the full consumption-based carbon footprint of the city.

DESNZ also provides a narrower measure of emissions within local-authority influence, excluding sources such as large industrial installations, motorways and railways. On this measure, emissions fell from 5.42 tonnes per person in 2011 to 3.06 tonnes in 2024. Although the long-term trend is downward, progress has varied between years. Total territorial emissions fell by 7.5% in 2023 and 9.8% in 2024, while emissions within local-authority influence fell by 2.5% in 2024.

Transport remained the largest source of territorial emissions in 2024, accounting for approximately 400,000 tonnes CO₂e, or 36% of the city total. Domestic buildings contributed approximately 317,000 tonnes, or 29%. Together, transport and domestic buildings accounted for around 65% of territorial emissions. Transport emissions changed little between 2023 and 2024, indicating that the Local Plan should address the need to travel and access to walking, cycling and public transport rather than relying principally on vehicle electrification.

Domestic emissions have more than halved since 2005 but changed little between 2023 and 2024. The city has a high proportion of older homes, and the CN28 review identified more than 50,000 solid-wall or inadequately insulated properties. In December 2023, 47.7% of Nottingham homes with a recorded Energy Performance Certificate were rated A to C, broadly consistent with the England figure of 47.0%.

The Local Plan can influence building emissions through development form, passive design, building reuse, renewable energy and heat-network readiness. Reuse may avoid emissions associated with demolition and new construction, but it will not always be technically or financially suitable. The SEA should therefore consider operational and embodied emissions without assuming that either retention or redevelopment is invariably preferable.

Nottingham-specific academic evidence shows that domestic energy use and its drivers vary across the city. Feng et al. (2025) found that dwelling size, tenure, unemployment, fuel poverty, income, energy efficiency and heating type operate differently between neighbourhoods. District heating was associated with lower recorded domestic gas and electricity consumption, while the effects of energy efficiency, income, fuel poverty and renewable heating were more variable. This supports place-based approaches to retrofit and heat decarbonisation rather than uniform city-wide interventions.

Research in Aspley, Clifton and St Ann's also identified limited awareness of sustainable heating technologies and concerns about affordability, performance and moving away from familiar heating systems. Earlier research into social housing retrofit in Aspley found that improvements reduced energy use and improved housing conditions, but expected bill savings were not fully realised. Outcomes were influenced by household behaviour, comfort preferences, awareness and post-installation advice. Heat decarbonisation therefore depends on household circumstances, affordability, engagement and advice as well as physical infrastructure.

The emerging Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Local Area Energy Plan is expected to identify priority locations and pathways for insulation, heat pumps, low-carbon heat, renewable generation, storage and electric-vehicle charging. It will provide strategic evidence for the SEA but should not be treated as confirmation that investment or infrastructure capacity is secured.

Nottingham's existing district heating network and emerging heat-network opportunities could help reduce building emissions in dense urban and regeneration areas. The February 2025 zoning report identifies 12 potential zones, including strategic zones in the city centre and at Phoenix Park, with possible heat sources including Eastcroft, water, mine water and air-source heat pumps. Tien et al. (2024) also identifies opportunities for network optimisation, storage, demand management and expansion. These opportunities remain subject to technical, financial and delivery considerations and should not be treated as confirmed schemes or guaranteed carbon savings. Network capacity, routing, safeguarding and phasing are considered under Material assets and infrastructure.

Climate adaptation is also important. City-specific UKCP18 analysis indicates warmer summers and winters, generally drier summers and wetter winters. Under the higher-emissions scenario assessed, mean summer temperature in 2040–2059 had a central projection of 2.3°C above the 1981–2000 baseline. The central projections indicated an 8% increase in winter rainfall and a 20% reduction in summer rainfall. These projections are probabilistic and should be updated when newer city-scale evidence becomes available.

Nottingham recorded a temperature of 39.8°C on 19 July 2022. Local research found that 53% of the population lived in areas within the two highest heat-exposure categories, including 20% in the highest category. Heat vulnerability was particularly evident around Hyson Green and the Arboretum, Radford, St Ann's, Sneinton and New Basford. Queen's Medical Centre and Nottingham City Hospital were also within areas of high mapped heat exposure. The Heat Vulnerability Index is suitable for strategic screening but does not measure individual exposure or indoor temperature.

Green and blue infrastructure can reduce overheating and runoff. Lower surface temperatures were identified around major parks, woodlands and the River Trent corridor, while street trees, gardens, allotments and smaller spaces can provide local cooling. The benefits depend on vegetation type, shade, location, accessibility and condition. Nature-based measures such as street trees, green roofs, rain gardens, wetlands and sustainable drainage also depend on appropriate design, adoption and long-term maintenance.

The Local Plan will need to manage trade-offs. Higher-density development can reduce land take and support public transport and heat networks, but may increase overheating and limit space for trees and drainage. Natural ventilation can reduce cooling demand but increase exposure to noise and air pollution. Heat-network benefits depend on the carbon intensity and resilience of their heat sources. The SEA should therefore assess climate mitigation and adaptation together.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

National policy, Building Regulations, grid decarbonisation, vehicle standards and technological change would continue to reduce some emissions. Existing public transport, retrofit, renewable-energy and heat-network programmes would also continue where funding and delivery arrangements allow. However, transport emissions may remain difficult to reduce, household responses to heating changes would remain uneven and climate hazards would continue to increase.

Without an updated Local Plan, there would be less scope to align growth with current emissions data, Local Area Energy Plan evidence, heat-network opportunities and heat-vulnerability and flood-risk information. Development would be addressed more frequently on a site-by-site basis, potentially missing coordinated opportunities for active travel, low-carbon heat, building reuse, sustainable drainage and connected green-blue infrastructure.

Existing homes would continue to dominate domestic energy demand. Retrofit could improve energy performance and comfort, but delivery would depend on funding, tenure, technical suitability, household engagement and supply-chain capacity. Nottingham-specific evidence indicates that interventions will not

have uniform effects, and untargeted programmes may not address the neighbourhoods or housing types with the greatest need.

Low-carbon energy and heat-network projects could proceed independently of the Local Plan. However, development could miss future connection opportunities or prejudice land and routes needed for infrastructure. Conversely, treating indicative energy opportunities as committed could create unrealistic assumptions about carbon reduction or development delivery.

The likely direction is therefore continued but uneven reductions in emissions alongside increasing heat and flood risks. The SEA should assess whether reasonable alternatives reduce emissions and climate vulnerability over the lifetime of development, taking account of spatial inequalities, household circumstances, infrastructure dependencies and uncertainty.

Material assets and infrastructure

Current baseline

This topic covers the transport, social, green, energy, utility, digital and community infrastructure needed to support development and maintain accessible and resilient neighbourhoods. The effects of growth will depend on whether infrastructure has sufficient capacity, can be delivered at the required time, and has secure funding, land and management arrangements.

Nottingham has a strong accessibility baseline associated with its compact urban form, extensive bus services, Nottingham Express Transit, Nottingham Station and relatively short distances between many homes, jobs and services. Census 2021 data show that 38.0% of households had no access to a car or van, compared with 43.7% in 2011. This reflects both the availability of alternatives and the characteristics of the city's population. Reliable, affordable and inclusive public transport is therefore particularly important, especially where residents without a car have limited access to services.

Nottingham Express Transit comprises two cross-city routes, approximately 32 kilometres of track and 50 tram stops. It connects the city centre and Nottingham Station with surrounding communities and major destinations, including the Queen's Medical Centre and the two universities. The network recorded 15.5 million journeys in 2023/24. It supports access to employment, education and healthcare and can enable higher-density development along sustainable transport corridors. Its future contribution will depend on reliability, affordability, capacity, interchange and connections to walking and cycling routes.

The City Vision 2050 identifies the Green Grid as a strategic concept integrating active travel, public transport, public realm and green infrastructure. It also identifies potential tram expansion, improvements to walking and cycling routes, and Nottingham Station's role as a principal gateway. These proposals could improve accessibility and support lower-car development, but are not all committed or funded. Delivery will depend on business cases, funding, land, phasing and coordination between the Council, the East Midlands Combined County Authority, operators, landowners and infrastructure providers.

Transport should be assessed as a network rather than as a series of individual projects. Development in accessible locations can support walking, cycling and public transport, but may also increase demand on services, stations, interchanges, routes and public spaces. Roads, railways and waterways can create severance between neighbourhoods and services. The SEA should therefore consider capacity, frequency, affordability, accessibility, severance and route quality rather than relying only on proximity to transport stops.

Education and health requirements will depend on the amount, type and distribution of growth, as well as household formation, population ageing, specialist needs and cross-boundary service use. City-wide capacity does not necessarily indicate that suitable capacity exists close to individual development locations. The Local Plan should therefore respond to updated evidence from relevant providers.

Healthcare infrastructure will require long-term planning. The Tomorrow's NUH programme proposes changes to the Queen's Medical Centre and City Hospital campuses, including new and upgraded facilities

and changes to the distribution of services. The main scheme cannot now begin before 2037 and its detailed form remains uncertain. The Local Plan should safeguard the hospitals' ability to change and use updated evidence on their land, access, transport and utility requirements without treating the programme as fully committed.

Electricity, heat, water, wastewater, drainage and digital networks are important development dependencies. They are considered here as material assets because their capacity, timing, funding and land requirements may affect whether growth and environmental mitigation can be delivered. Their wider effects are considered under the relevant SEA topics. This section focuses on infrastructure capacity and delivery rather than emissions or household energy use.

Electricity demand is likely to increase as heating, transport and building services become more electrified and renewable generation, storage and energy-intensive uses expand. National Grid Electricity Distribution's Network Development Plan and Future Energy Scenarios provide strategic evidence on demand, generation headroom and potential constraints, but do not confirm that individual developments can connect within the required timescale.

Major development may require substations, cable routes, network reinforcement, flexibility services or storage. Site assessment and infrastructure planning should distinguish existing capacity from upgrades dependent on investment, developer contributions, land, consents or future provider decisions. These requirements may affect development capacity, phasing, viability and land safeguarding.

Heat networks may require energy centres, pipe routes, pumping equipment, storage, connections to heat sources and access for maintenance. Development within or near potential heat-network zones should be assessed for connection and safeguarding opportunities. These should not be treated as committed infrastructure without evidence of funding, governance and deliverability. Site layouts should nevertheless avoid prejudicing reasonable future connections identified by current evidence.

Energy infrastructure should normally be treated as an informant rather than an automatic development constraint. The principal questions are whether reinforcement is required, whether development could support or obstruct infrastructure, and whether the necessary works can be delivered in time. Where these matters remain uncertain, the SEA should record the implications for reasonable alternatives, site capacity, phasing and mitigation.

Water supply, wastewater treatment and drainage also require cumulative assessment. The Greater Nottingham Water Cycle Study and Severn Trent plans provide strategic evidence, but do not demonstrate that every site can be served without local reinforcement. Growth may require upgrades to water mains, sewers, pumping stations, treatment works or drainage systems. Infrastructure planning should distinguish existing capacity and programmed investment from works dependent on future funding, regulatory approval or developer agreement.

Digital infrastructure supports employment, education and access to services. It may enable flexible working and reduce some journeys, but does not replace physical accessibility or face-to-face provision. The Local Plan can support fixed and mobile connectivity and coordinate provision through major development, while recognising that investment and service quality are largely determined by providers and national regulation.

Open and green spaces are also essential infrastructure. The Open and Green Spaces Quality Audit identifies 492 sites covering approximately 2,472 hectares, of which around 1,215 hectares were considered accessible. These spaces support recreation, health, biodiversity, drainage, climate adaptation, active travel and neighbourhood character.

Provision is uneven, and accessibility can be affected by roads, railways, waterways, entrances, condition and suitability for different users. The SEA should therefore consider the function, quality, capacity, accessibility and management of open space rather than relying only on its area or proximity.

New open space and green infrastructure should respond to local need and connect with active travel, public transport and the wider green and blue network. Biodiversity net gain may support habitat creation, but biodiversity units are not substitutes for accessible recreation space, play facilities or public realm. Multifunctional provision will be appropriate only where recreation, biodiversity, drainage and management requirements are compatible.

Across all infrastructure types, the principal issue is deliverability. Inclusion in a strategy, provider plan or opportunity map does not mean that infrastructure is secured. The SEA should distinguish existing capacity, committed and funded schemes, dependent investment and longer-term aspirations. Where development relies on uncertain infrastructure, the implications for phasing, viability, mitigation and reasonable alternatives should be identified.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

Existing infrastructure planning, investment and development-management processes would continue without an updated Local Plan. Provider programmes, sector plans and annual transport investment would guide some decisions, while existing parks, community facilities and other infrastructure would continue to operate and improve where funding and capacity allow.

Infrastructure providers would continue to invest in electricity, heat, water, wastewater, digital, health and transport systems in accordance with their duties, regulatory settlements and priorities. However, investment may not align fully with the location, scale or timing of development coming forward under an older spatial framework.

Development would continue through existing allocations, permissions and windfall sites. Planning obligations could secure site-specific mitigation, but would be less effective at coordinating cumulative requirements across several developments. Strategic infrastructure could depend on separate negotiations, increasing uncertainty about funding, timing and responsibility.

Electrification and energy-intensive uses are likely to increase demand on electricity networks. Provider-led reinforcement and flexibility measures would continue, but there would be less scope to coordinate growth assumptions, safeguard land and routes or phase development around capacity. Similar issues could affect heat networks, transport, water and wastewater infrastructure.

Inequalities in the quality and accessibility of open space and community infrastructure may persist where improvements depend on constrained maintenance budgets or short-term funding. Individual developments could provide facilities or contributions without addressing wider network gaps or the neighbourhoods with the greatest need.

Biodiversity net gain would create demand and funding for habitat delivery. Without a coordinated spatial approach, however, habitat sites may be harder to integrate with open space, drainage, active travel and climate adaptation. Project-level requirements could therefore be met without strengthening the wider green and blue infrastructure network.

Overall, the absence of an updated Local Plan would weaken coordination between growth, infrastructure investment and environmental mitigation. This would increase the risks of delayed or piecemeal provision, unresolved cumulative effects and reliance on uncertain mitigation. The SEA should assess whether reasonable alternatives use existing infrastructure effectively, avoid significant or unresolved capacity constraints, and provide a credible basis for timely delivery and long-term management.

Cultural heritage

Current baseline

This topic covers designated and non-designated heritage assets, archaeology, caves, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, townscape, collections, traditions and cultural identity. Nottingham's historic environment reflects more than 3,000 years of settlement and 1,200 years of continuous occupation and change. Its significance derives not only from individual buildings and monuments, but from the

relationships between streets, spaces, landscape, archaeology and community associations. The Nottingham Heritage Strategy identifies three continuing priorities: improving understanding of the historic environment, using heritage constructively within city life and regeneration, and enabling residents and visitors to experience and celebrate the city's past.

The Authority Monitoring Report records 33.5 conservation areas, including one shared with Broxtowe (hence the 0.5), together with 11 Grade I, 38 Grade II* and 760 Grade II listed building entries. It also records 619 locally listed buildings. These figures supersede the lower totals in the 2015 Heritage Strategy, reflecting subsequent designation, review and recording. The Council describes the city's conservation areas as covering a diverse range of environments, including the Lace Market and Canal industrial areas, historic villages, planned residential suburbs, market spaces and historic landscapes such as the Arboretum and Wollaton Park.

The city centre contains a particularly dense concentration of heritage assets and sensitive townscape relationships. These include Nottingham Castle and Castle Rock, the Council House and Old Market Square, the Lace Market, historic churches, civic buildings, warehouses, streets and public spaces. Nottingham's topography is also important. Castle Rock and other sandstone outcrops, the River Trent, the canal and historic routes have influenced the city's development, skyline and pattern of movement. Beyond the centre, assets including Wollaton Hall and Park, St Ann's Allotments, the Arboretum, historic village centres, university buildings and former industrial sites contribute to the character of individual neighbourhoods.

Historic parks, gardens and open spaces form part of this resource. There are ten registered parks and gardens, including four then registered at Grade II*, as well as more than 120 open spaces of local historic importance. These spaces can combine archaeological, designed-landscape, ecological, recreational and community value. Their significance may depend on layout, planting, structures, views, boundaries and the relationship with surrounding development. Assessment should therefore consider effects on historic landscape character and setting, rather than treating parks solely as open-space or biodiversity assets.

Nottingham's caves are a defining and nationally unusual part of the historic environment. In May 2026, the number of confirmed caves recorded beneath the city reached 1,000, compared with approximately 550 known when the Heritage Strategy was published. Further caves are expected to be identified through documentary research, archaeological investigation and redevelopment. Cut into the city's sandstone over more than 1,000 years, the caves have served as homes, workshops, tanneries, maltings, storage spaces, beer cellars and air-raid shelters. They provide evidence of ordinary domestic, commercial and industrial activity that may not survive above ground.

Caves can also create development and management constraints. Many lie under existing buildings, streets or privately owned land and may be inaccessible, poorly documented or structurally vulnerable. They are also susceptible to deterioration from erosion, poor vegetation management and the effects of climate change. Increasing incidences of flooding can contribute to structural instability and the loss of cave fabric and associated archaeological remains, while unmanaged vegetation growth can accelerate rock loss, affecting both the significance and appearance of caves and creating potential risks to public safety.

The Council's Nottingham Caves Technical Guide, issued in 2025, supports their identification, investigation, maintenance and appropriate reuse. Together with Local Plan Policy HE2 and the caves supplementary planning document, it requires the potential presence of caves to be considered early where development involves below-ground works or could prevent future access. The SEA should

recognise both possible harm from excavation, loading, vibration, flooding, erosion or loss of access, and opportunities to conserve, interpret or bring caves into suitable new use.

Not all heritage assets are designated. The Council's Local List contains more than 600 buildings and structures valued for their architectural, historic, social or cultural contribution. Local listing does not provide the statutory protection associated with national designation, but it identifies significance that should be considered when development is proposed. Archaeological remains, historic street patterns, views, townscape features, social history, collections and cultural traditions may also contribute to local identity even where they have no formal designation. (Known archaeological remains are recorded in the Nottingham City Historic Environment Record.)

The condition and continued use of heritage assets remain material concerns. The AMR records 19 places at risk in March 2026, comprising ten conservation areas and nine listed buildings, excluding Grade II listed buildings. Separately, the Council maintains the local register for Grade II buildings. Its current webpage records 43 Grade II entries, around 5% of the city's Grade II listed stock, as remaining at risk, while 38 entries were removed from the local register between 2013 and 2025. These figures cover different asset categories and should not be combined into a single total. They indicate both continuing vulnerability and evidence that repair and reuse can remove assets from risk.

Risks arise from vacancy, poor maintenance, inappropriate alteration, development pressure, traffic, weak demand for some building types and the cost of repair or adaptation. Conservation-area decline can result from the cumulative loss of historic details and poor-quality incremental change as well as from individual major schemes. Historic England notes that deterioration can reduce confidence and investment, creating a cycle in which environmental and economic decline reinforce one another.

Heritage can support regeneration, cultural activity, education, tourism and community identity. Nottingham has examples of industrial, religious and civic buildings being adapted for commercial, residential, educational and cultural uses, particularly in the Lace Market and Creative Quarter. Reuse may also retain embodied materials and reduce demolition waste.

The City Vision 2050's City of Legends concept presents heritage as an asset as well as a constraint. The Local Plan can support this approach by managing change, protecting significance and setting, promoting appropriate reuse, guiding development around strategic views and historic areas, and better revealing currently inaccessible heritage. It should also recognise that Nottingham's cultural identity extends beyond prominent buildings and established narratives to include industrial history, migration, community traditions, protest, literature, sport and the experiences of different neighbourhoods. The SEA should assess heritage-led regeneration on its specific effects rather than treating it as inherently beneficial.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

Statutory protection for listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens would continue. National planning policy, the Historic Environment Record, the Local List, existing conservation-area controls and caves guidance would continue to inform planning decisions. Owners, community organisations, Historic England and the Council could also continue to pursue grants, repairs, interpretation and reuse projects where resources and viable uses are available.

However, existing policies would become progressively less aligned with current evidence, including the expanding caves record, updated heritage-at-risk information and emerging proposals for regeneration, density and tall buildings. Decisions would be more dependent on individual applications, making it more difficult to address cumulative effects on townscape, historic street patterns, strategic views, archaeological potential and the setting of groups of assets.

Vacant or deteriorating buildings could remain at risk where repair costs exceed available funding or no sustainable use is identified. Some assets would be improved through private investment or grant-funded projects, but progress would be uneven and dependent on ownership, market conditions and public-sector capacity. Conservation areas affected by vacancy, traffic, poor maintenance or incremental loss of historic details could continue to deteriorate without coordinated management and investment.

Without an updated Local Plan, there would also be less opportunity to integrate heritage considerations at the earliest stage of spatial strategy, site allocation and infrastructure planning. This could reduce opportunities to reconnect historic routes, secure appropriate public access, coordinate cave investigation, support heritage-led area regeneration and manage the relationship between taller or denser development and sensitive townscape. The likely result would not necessarily be widespread direct loss, because statutory controls would remain, but a greater risk of fragmented decision-making, missed enhancement opportunities and gradual erosion of character through cumulative change.

Landscape, townscape and design

Current baseline

This topic covers landscape, townscape, skyline, strategic and local views, density, tall buildings, design quality, public realm and local character. It also considers how buildings, streets, spaces, vegetation, topography and infrastructure combine to shape the experience and identity of different parts of Nottingham. These matters are closely connected to cultural heritage, green infrastructure, climate adaptation, health, transport and the efficient use of land.

Nottingham is a compact and predominantly urban authority. Landscape is therefore often experienced through townscape, river and canal corridors, parks, allotments, cemeteries, street trees, former railway land, public spaces and views between buildings, rather than through extensive areas of open countryside. The River Trent corridor provides one of the city's largest and most continuous landscape features, while the River Leen, Nottingham and Beeston Canal and smaller watercourses contribute to local character and provide links between neighbourhoods, open spaces and the wider urban area.

The city has varied topography. Castle Rock and other sandstone outcrops, river valleys, ridgelines and changes in ground level influence the form of the city and create important views and landmarks. Nottingham Castle, the Council House dome, historic churches, Wollaton Hall and other prominent buildings contribute to the skyline and help people understand and navigate the city. The significance of a view may arise from the prominence of a particular landmark, the relationship between several buildings or spaces, the historic development of an area or its value to local communities. Assessment should therefore consider the composition and experience of views, rather than relying only on whether a landmark remains technically visible.

Nottingham's townscape is varied. It includes the medieval and industrial street patterns of the city centre and Lace Market, Victorian and Edwardian neighbourhoods, historic villages incorporated into the urban area, planned estates, university campuses, employment areas, post-war redevelopment and more recent high-density development. Different areas have distinct patterns of plots, streets, building heights, materials, roof forms, open spaces and relationships between buildings and the public realm. These characteristics can provide a basis for new development without requiring it to copy historic architectural styles.

The city's historic parks and green spaces also make an important contribution to landscape and townscape. Wollaton Park, the Arboretum, Forest Recreation Ground, Highfields Park, Victoria Embankment, St Ann's Allotments and smaller parks and gardens provide visual relief, mature vegetation and settings for surrounding buildings and neighbourhoods. Trees, waterways and open spaces can frame

views, soften built form and support a sense of place. Their contribution depends on their location, condition, accessibility and relationship with surrounding development, not simply their total area.

The City Vision 2050 calls for a liveable, high-density and high-rise urban core in appropriate locations. Greater density may support brownfield regeneration, reduce pressure on undeveloped land and increase the number of people living close to employment, services and public transport. It may also help support local businesses and improve the viability of public transport, heat networks and other infrastructure. These effects are not automatic. They depend on the location, type, design and management of development and the capacity of surrounding infrastructure and public spaces.

Taller buildings can mark important locations, contribute to regeneration and help accommodate development on constrained sites. However, they can also affect the skyline, strategic views, heritage settings, local character and the perceived scale of streets and spaces. Their physical and visual effects may extend well beyond the application site. Groups of tall buildings can have cumulative effects that differ from those of an individual building, including the creation of a new skyline or a change in the relative prominence of existing landmarks. The SEA should therefore consider building height in relation to topography, existing townscape, heritage significance, public transport accessibility and the capacity of an area to accommodate change.

Tall and high-density development can also affect local environmental conditions. Building height, spacing and orientation influence daylight, sunlight, overshadowing, wind, ventilation and urban heat. Poorly configured development can create uncomfortable wind conditions, reduce sunlight to homes and public spaces, increase overheating or limit space for trees and sustainable drainage. Conversely, well-designed density can provide enclosure, shelter, active frontages and a mix of uses within walking distance. Assessment should consider these pathways directly rather than treating high density as either inherently efficient or inherently harmful.

Design quality is therefore a key issue. New development should provide a satisfactory relationship between buildings, streets, open spaces and existing neighbourhoods. Relevant considerations include building form and materials, active frontages, entrances, servicing, parking, waste storage, inclusive access, privacy, security, usable outdoor space and the transition between different building scales. Good design should respond to context while allowing appropriate change and contemporary architecture.

Public realm is particularly important in areas of higher density because residents and visitors depend more heavily on shared streets, squares, parks and other outdoor spaces. The quality of these spaces affects walking, social interaction, accessibility, safety, urban cooling and the overall experience of development. Public realm should be designed as functioning infrastructure with clear arrangements for delivery, adoption and maintenance. A visually attractive scheme may still perform poorly if spaces are inaccessible, overly shaded, exposed to wind, dominated by servicing or difficult to maintain.

Major roads, railway lines, waterways and large development sites can create severance and reduce connections between neighbourhoods. Regeneration may provide opportunities to repair these relationships by restoring street connections, improving crossings, creating active routes and linking public spaces. However, large plots and inward-looking schemes can reinforce existing barriers. The SEA should therefore consider permeability and the relationship between new development and its wider surroundings, rather than assessing design only within site boundaries.

The relationship between design and landscape should also include climate resilience and biodiversity. Trees, green roofs, sustainable drainage, naturalised water features and connected green spaces can provide shade, cooling, habitat and surface-water management while improving townscape. These measures need sufficient space, suitable growing conditions and long-term management. They should be

integrated into site layout and building design from the outset rather than added after the principal development form has been established.

Likely evolution without the Local Plan

National design policy, existing Local Plan policies, conservation-area controls and development-management processes would continue to apply. Individual proposals would still be assessed for design, heritage, amenity, transport and environmental effects. Some regeneration schemes would improve buildings, streets and public spaces, particularly where supported by public investment or comprehensive masterplanning.

Development pressure is nevertheless likely to continue, especially in the city centre, around transport corridors and on major brownfield sites. Without an updated Local Plan, there would be less ability to set a clear spatial approach to density, tall buildings, strategic views, public realm and transitions between regeneration areas and existing neighbourhoods. Decisions would depend more on individual applications, increasing the risk that cumulative effects on the skyline, townscape and local environmental conditions are considered only after substantial development has occurred.

Opportunities for high-quality regeneration would remain, but outcomes could be uneven. Some sites may deliver well-designed, connected and climate-resilient places, while others may maximise development capacity without adequate public realm, green infrastructure or community facilities. The absence of updated city-wide evidence could also increase uncertainty about where substantial changes in height or density are appropriate.

The likely baseline direction is therefore continued urban regeneration and increased density, with a risk of incremental or cumulative change to skyline, character and liveability. An updated Local Plan, supported by tall-buildings, strategic-views and design evidence, would provide a clearer basis for directing growth and securing the design quality, public realm, infrastructure and mitigation needed to support it.

5. Environmental issues and problems (Task A3)

The review of plans and programmes and the baseline identify the environmental issues that are most likely to shape the Nottingham Local Plan. These are not conclusions on the effects of any policy, site or reasonable alternative. They identify the matters that the SEA should carry forward into the assessment framework, reasonable alternatives, mitigation and monitoring.

The issues reflect Nottingham's specific circumstances: a compact urban area with high development pressure, strong reliance on brownfield regeneration, significant green and blue infrastructure assets, unequal access to quality open space, city-wide air quality issues, flood risk along key corridors, and a substantial heritage resource. The SEA will use these issues to test whether the Local Plan can accommodate growth while improving environmental capacity and avoiding or mitigating significant adverse effects.

SEA topic	Key issues for Nottingham	Implications for the SEA
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Nottingham has an extensive urban ecological network, but it is fragmented. Ecological value is found in large parks, river and canal corridors, Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, priority habitats, open mosaic brownfield habitats, trees, allotments, cemeteries and smaller sites that act as stepping stones for wildlife. The overall amount of green-blue space does not, by itself, show whether the network is functioning well. Condition, connectivity, biodiversity value, ecological role and public access all need to be considered separately.	Assess whether options avoid loss and fragmentation, strengthen ecological connectivity and support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Brownfield land should not be assumed to have low biodiversity value. Biodiversity net gain should be assessed by location, additionality, long-term management and contribution to the city network, not only by metric score.
Population, housing and communities	Nottingham has delivered new housing in recent years, including a substantial amount of purpose-built student accommodation. However, current evidence indicates increased vacancy in the purpose-built student accommodation sector and no assumed short-term growth in student numbers. Future population growth also remains uncertain. For the SEA, the key issues are not only the total number of people living in the city, but also changes in household size, the ageing population, affordability, overcrowding, housing quality and the need for accessible homes.	Assess the amount, type, tenure and location of housing, including affordable, family, accessible, adaptable, specialist and older persons accommodation. Test whether PBSA, co-living and general housing proposals are justified by current evidence and support balanced neighbourhoods and efficient land use.
Health and wellbeing	Health outcomes are generally worse than national averages and vary significantly between neighbourhoods. Deprivation, poor housing, air pollution, noise, inactivity, access to services, open-space quality, safety and climate vulnerability interact. Practical access to open space is affected by	Consider whether options are likely to affect the environmental and spatial factors associated with health inequalities, including whether benefits and adverse effects are distributed unevenly between places or communities.

	barriers, quality, condition, facilities and suitability for different users.	Where proportionate evidence is available, consider practical access to open space, play, recreation, health and community facilities, active travel routes, healthy food environments and inclusive design, together with exposure to air pollution, noise, overheating and flood risk.
Soil, land and brownfield regeneration	Nottingham's tight boundary means growth depends heavily on brownfield regeneration, building reuse and appropriate density. Previously developed land may also contain contamination, difficult ground conditions, archaeology, caves, flood risk, habitat value or infrastructure constraints. Higher density can improve land efficiency but can also reduce space for trees, drainage, daylight, amenity and open space if poorly designed.	Assess land efficiency alongside environmental capacity and liveability. Consider remediation, ground constraints, soil sealing, building reuse, embodied carbon, mineral and waste safeguarding, construction waste and the trade-offs between development, habitat delivery, flood management and open-space provision.
Water and flood risk	Flood risk is associated with the Trent, Leen, canals, surface water, groundwater, sewers and combined pathways. Climate change is expected to increase peak river flows and intense rainfall. Major regeneration areas include defended or flood-sensitive land, and updated Trent and Leen modelling is expected to change or refine the evidence base.	Apply the sequential approach and assess residual risk, safe access, climate allowances, surface-water management, floodplain function, wastewater capacity and water quality. Distinguish secured mitigation from measures dependent on later modelling, funding, land, adoption or maintenance.
Air quality and pollution	Monitored air quality met relevant objectives in 2024, but pollution remains a health issue and exposure are uneven. Traffic, heating, construction, industry, noise, light, odour and contamination are relevant. Accessible urban locations may reduce car trips but can also place sensitive uses near roads, railways, the night-time economy or industrial activities.	Assess emissions and exposure separately. Consider sensitive receptors, cumulative construction effects, land-use compatibility, noise, ventilation, overheating, lighting near ecological corridors and contamination pathways. Do not assume vehicle electrification removes all transport-related pollution effects.
Climate and energy	Territorial emissions have fallen, but transport and domestic buildings remain major sources. Nottingham also faces increasing heat, intense rainfall and flood risk. Heat vulnerability is spatially uneven, and green-blue infrastructure provides cooling only where it is well located, accessible, shaded and managed. Heat network opportunities depend on deliverability and future heat sources.	Assess whether options reduce emissions within planning influence and improve resilience over the lifetime of development. Consider location, active travel, public transport, building reuse, heat networks, renewables, grid capacity, overheating, urban greening, tree canopy, SuDS and climate-vulnerable communities.

Material assets and infrastructure	Growth depends on timely transport, utilities, energy, water, wastewater, digital, health, education, community and green-blue infrastructure. Infrastructure projects vary in certainty, and viability may affect delivery. Open space, biodiversity net gain, SuDS and public realm require long-term management, not just initial provision.	Assess capacity, phasing, funding, trigger points and cumulative infrastructure needs. Distinguish committed schemes from aspirations. Treat open space, green-blue infrastructure and public realm as functioning infrastructure with clear delivery, adoption and maintenance arrangements.
Cultural heritage	Nottingham has a dense and varied historic environment, including conservation areas, listed and locally listed buildings, archaeology, historic parks and gardens, strategic views and an extensive number of caves and cave systems. The caves record is expanding and can affect below-ground works, structural stability, access and interpretation. Heritage assets also support regeneration where reuse is viable and sensitive.	Assess significance, setting, cumulative townscape effects, archaeology, caves, heritage at risk, adaptive reuse and opportunities to better reveal significance. Heritage-led regeneration should be assessed on its specific effects and dependencies rather than assumed to be positive in all cases.
Landscape, townscape and design	Nottingham's compact form and development needs increase pressure for higher density and taller buildings, especially in the city centre and regeneration areas. Effects can extend to skyline, strategic views, heritage settings, daylight, sunlight, wind, overheating, public realm, green infrastructure, local character and infrastructure capacity.	Assess whether density and height are directed to appropriate locations and supported by design quality, liveability, public realm, green-blue infrastructure and services. Consider cumulative skyline and view effects, transitions to existing neighbourhoods, microclimate, inclusive access, permeability and long-term management.

Note: References to options include integrated spatial strategies, policy approaches and packages of sites. The level and unit of assessment will reflect the nature of the decision being made. Proposed allocations and reasonable site alternatives will be assessed individually where location-specific characteristics could materially affect the assessment, while common or strategic effects may also be assessed collectively.

These issues show that the SEA will need to assess more than whether the Local Plan avoids direct environmental harm. It will need to test whether different options improve Nottingham's environmental capacity, particularly through brownfield regeneration, green and blue infrastructure, nature recovery, climate resilience, healthier places and deliverable mitigation.

6. Developing SEA objectives (Task A4) and reasonable alternatives

SEA objectives provide the framework for assessing the Local Plan and its reasonable alternatives. They are informed by the review of relevant plans and programmes, the environmental baseline and the key issues identified above. They are intended to be clear, locally relevant and capable of consistent application to policy, spatial and site options.

The objectives also take account of the [Environmental Improvement Plan 2025 \(EIP\)](#), which provides the current statutory framework for improving England's natural environment. The EIP's ten goals address restored nature, air, water, chemicals and pesticides, waste, resources, climate change, environmental hazards, biosecurity and access to nature. Relevant EIP goals, commitments and indicators have been used to inform the scope of the objectives and assessment questions. This will help the SEA consider how the Local Plan could support national environmental priorities and statutory target-delivery pathways, while recognising that the EIP operates mainly at the national level and that not every commitment or indicator can be applied directly to a local plan.

The SEA objectives reflect the breadth of topics identified in the SEA Regulations and the role of the Local Plan in contributing to sustainable development. The Environmental Report will therefore use a broad and integrated assessment framework, informed where relevant by the EIP and its Environmental Indicator Framework. Its conclusions will remain focused on the likely significant environmental effects of the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives, the measures needed to avoid or mitigate adverse effects, and opportunities to support environmental improvement. Alignment with an EIP goal or indicator will inform the assessment but will not, by itself, determine whether an effect is significant or whether an option is appropriate.

This table makes the relationship with the EIP explicit while avoiding an implication that the Local Plan or SEA is directly responsible for delivering every national EIP commitment.

Proposed assessment approach

The SEA is expected to use a combined objectives-led and baseline-led assessment approach. The objectives-led component will be used primarily for assessing strategic options and policies against the Nottingham SEA objectives, drawing on professional judgement supported by available evidence. The baseline-led component will be used where spatial options, site allocations or location-specific policies are assessed, using GIS, environmental constraints, infrastructure evidence and other relevant datasets to identify likely significant effects and key sensitivities.

The assessment will be predominantly qualitative at this stage of plan preparation, reflecting the strategic nature of the Local Plan and the level of information available. Quantitative information will be used where suitable evidence exists, including flood risk, housing, biodiversity, transport, infrastructure and climate-related data. Assessment conclusions will take account of the magnitude, duration, reversibility and likelihood of effects, together with uncertainty, cumulative effects and the potential for mitigation. Detailed significance criteria and assessment matrices will be presented in the Environmental Report once the reasonable alternatives and emerging Local Plan options have been defined.

SEA Appraisal Framework

SEA theme	Revised Nottingham SEA objective	Assessment Approach	Most Relevant Local Plan Themes	EIP / EIF alignment
1. Health and wellbeing	Improve the environmental and spatial determinants of health, reduce unequal exposure to poor housing, pollution, flood risk, heat, severance and poor access to services and open space, and support the delivery and accessibility of healthcare infrastructure.	- Assess the likely overall effect on the environmental and spatial conditions that influence health and health inequalities. - Consider, where relevant, exposure to environmental risks, access to health-supporting services and open space, opportunities for active and inclusive living, and the distribution of benefits and adverse effects between communities. - Reach a proportionate judgement against the objective, taking account of relevant direct, indirect, cumulative and longer-term effects.	5. Health and Wellbeing; 4. Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change; 8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 2. Homes and Communities; 10. Infrastructure, Viability and Developer Contributions.	Goal 10: access to nature and health (G3, G4 and G7); Goal 2: air (A3 and A5); Goal 8: environmental hazards (F1-F3).
2. Transport and connectivity	Reduce car dependence and improve access to jobs, services and open space through walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport, inclusive public realm and connected Green Grid routes.	- Assess whether the location and form of development are likely to reduce car dependence and improve inclusive access by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. - Consider the connectivity, safety and accessibility of routes and the resulting effects on access to jobs, services and open space, traffic, emissions, noise and severance. - Reach an overall judgement against the objective, including relevant cumulative and longer-term effects of planned growth and transport measures.	6. Transport and Connectivity; 8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 5. Health and Wellbeing; 10. Infrastructure, Viability and Developer Contributions.	Goal 2: air (A3 and A5); Goal 7: climate change; Goal 10: green-blue infrastructure and transport noise (G3 and H5).

3. Efficient use of land	Use Nottingham's limited land and building stock efficiently by prioritising suitable reuse, brownfield regeneration and appropriate density while protecting ecological, heritage, amenity, soil and water functions.	- Assess whether land and existing buildings are likely to be used efficiently through suitable reuse, brownfield regeneration and appropriate density, while protecting environmental functions and valued assets. - Consider the relationship between the scale, density and form of development and site sensitivity, including ecology, heritage, amenity, soils, ground conditions, and water. - Reach a holistic judgement against the objective, including relevant secondary and cumulative effects, rather than treating individual considerations as separate tests.	1. Growth Delivery and Regeneration; 7. Design and Density; 8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 9. Heritage and Identity.	Goal 6: resources and healthy soils (E7 and J2); Goal 4: chemicals and contaminated land; Goal 5: circular economy and waste.
4. Climate and energy	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions influenced by planning, support the transition to a resilient net zero energy system, and increase resilience to heat, intense rainfall, flooding, drought and other climate risks affecting Nottingham's communities, buildings, infrastructure and natural environment.	- Assess the likely contribution to reducing planning-related greenhouse gas emissions, enabling a resilient net zero energy system and adapting to climate risks relevant to Nottingham. - Consider how development location, form and operation affect emissions, energy infrastructure and resilience to heat, intense rainfall, flooding and drought. - Reach an evidence-led judgement against the objective, taking account of relevant direct, indirect, cumulative and long-term effects and interactions between mitigation and adaptation.	4. Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change; 8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 10. Infrastructure, Viability and Developer Contributions	Goal 7: climate change; Goal 8: environmental hazards (F1-F3); supporting links to Goal 1 (woodland and habitats) and Goal 10 (green-blue infrastructure).
5. Pollution and air quality	Improve environmental quality and reduce emissions and harmful exposure to air pollution, noise, vibration, artificial light, odour, contamination,	Assess whether the proposal is likely to prevent or reduce pollution and harmful exposure, or create or intensify risks to people, amenity, water, land or biodiversity.	4. Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change; 5. Health and Wellbeing; 6. Transport and	Goal 2: air (A1, A3, A5-A7); Goal 4: chemicals and contaminated land (H3 and J5); Goal

	hazardous substances and construction impacts.	- Consider the location and sensitivity of receptors, interactions between pollution sources and pathways, and the scope for effective avoidance or mitigation. - Reach an overall judgement against the objective, including relevant cumulative and construction effects where these could be significant.	Connectivity; 1. Growth Delivery and Regeneration.	10: transport noise (H5).
6. Water and flood risk	Avoid inappropriate development in flood-risk areas, manage surface water close to source, use water efficiently, protect and improve water quality, and strengthen the ecological, recreational and townscape role of the Trent, Leen, canals and other blue assets.	- Assess whether development is likely to avoid or reduce flood risk, manage surface water sustainably, use water efficiently, protect or improve water quality and support the multifunctional role of rivers, canals and other blue assets. - Consider location, development lifetime, catchment and infrastructure relationships, residual risk and opportunities for integrated blue-green measures (including SuDS). - Reach a proportionate overall judgement, including downstream, cumulative, climate-related and long-term effects where relevant.	4. Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change; 8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 1. Growth Delivery and Regeneration; 10. Infrastructure, Viability and Developer Contributions	Goal 3: water (B1-B7 and E8), including SuDS and water efficiency; Goal 8: flood and drought resilience (F1-F3).

7. Biodiversity and green infrastructure	Protect, restore, enhance and connect Nottingham's habitats, species, trees, open spaces and green-blue corridors so that nature recovery, biodiversity net gain, climate resilience and inclusive access to nature are delivered where most needed and ecologically appropriate.	- Assess whether development is likely to protect ecological assets and functions and contribute to the restoration, enhancement and connection of habitats, species, trees, open spaces and green-blue corridors. - Consider ecological sensitivity, condition and connectivity, nature recovery priorities, and the compatibility of biodiversity, climate resilience and inclusive access. - Reach an overall judgement against the objective at relevant spatial and temporal scales, including material indirect, cumulative and synergistic effects.	8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 4. Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change; 7. Design and Density.	Goal 1: restored nature (D1-D7); Goal 9: biosecurity (H1-H2); Goal 10: access to nature and green-blue infrastructure (G3-G7).
8. Landscape, townscape and design	Shape growth so that Nottingham's skyline, views, public realm, streets, waterways, green spaces and neighbourhood character are managed positively while enabling well-designed, inclusive and climate-responsive change in appropriate locations.	- Assess whether growth is likely to conserve or enhance landscape and townscape character while enabling appropriately located, well-designed, inclusive change. - Consider relationships with skyline, views, topography, daylight, waterways, green spaces, streets, public realm and neighbourhood character, and the quality and functionality of resulting places. - Reach a contextual overall judgement against the objective, including relevant visual, secondary, cumulative and longer-term effects.	7. Design and Density; 8. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; 9. Heritage and Identity; 1. Growth Delivery and Regeneration	Goal 10: landscape and waterscape character, green-blue infrastructure and transport noise (G1, G3 and H5); Goal 8: urban greening and heat resilience.

9. Historic environment	Conserve and enhance Nottingham's designated and non-designated heritage assets, archaeology, caves, historic landscapes, townscape and settings, and support sensitive reuse, access and interpretation where viable and appropriate.	- Assess the likely effect on the significance, setting and conservation of designated and non-designated heritage assets, archaeology, caves, historic landscapes and townscape. - Consider potential harm, loss and cumulative change alongside opportunities for conservation, sensitive reuse, access and interpretation where compatible with significance. - Reach an overall judgement reflecting the importance and sensitivity of affected assets, the scale and reversibility of change, and relevant direct, indirect and long-term effects.	9. Heritage and Identity; 7. Design and Density; 1. Growth Delivery and Regeneration.	Goal 10: landscape character and condition of heritage features (G1 and G2), including the aim of reducing heritage assets at risk.
10. Natural resources and waste	Reduce avoidable resource use, support building and material reuse, minimise construction and operational waste, protect and improve soil functions, and prevent conflict with waste, minerals and utility infrastructure.	- Assess whether development is likely to use land, buildings and materials efficiently, reduce avoidable waste, protect soil functions and avoid conflict with waste, minerals and utility infrastructure. - Consider the overall resource implications of the scale, location, design and delivery of development, including opportunities for retention, adaptation and reuse and potential displacement effects, and safeguarding of natural, waste, minerals and utility infrastructure where relevant. - Reach a proportionate judgement across the development lifecycle, including relevant indirect and cumulative effects.	4. Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change; 1. Growth Delivery and Regeneration; 10. Infrastructure, Viability and Developer Contributions; 7. Design and Density	Goal 5: waste and circular economy (J3, J4 and J6); Goal 6: resources and healthy soils (E7 and J2); Goal 4: harmful chemicals where relevant.

Notes:

1. References to human health and communities include the population likely to be affected by environmental change, including relevant differences in exposure, sensitivity and vulnerability.
2. Biodiversity includes fauna, flora, habitats, species and relevant ecological functions and connections.
3. Material assets will be considered through the relevant SEA objectives and include, where applicable, land and buildings, transport networks, water and wastewater infrastructure, energy infrastructure, waste facilities, minerals infrastructure and other physical infrastructure or resources likely to be significantly affected by the Plan.
4. In applying the framework, likely significant positive and negative effects will be considered over the short, medium and long term. Permanent and temporary, direct and indirect, secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, and relevant interrelationships between environmental matters, will be considered where applicable and proportionate to the proposal and available evidence.

Applying the SEA objectives

Qualitative and policy assessment

The same SEA objectives and assessment approaches will be used when assessing policies, spatial options and potential allocations. Their application will reflect the nature and level of detail of the matter being assessed. Policy assessment will focus on the likely effects of the policy direction and its implementation, while spatial and site assessment will draw on relevant location-specific evidence, environmental sensitivities and effect pathways. This contextual application does not create separate assessment questions, sub-criteria or tests.

The scoring method should be transparent and proportionate. A simple scale is proposed.

Symbol	Meaning	Explanation
++	Significant positive effect	The option is likely to make a clear and substantial contribution to the SEA objective.
+	Positive effect	The option is likely to contribute to the SEA objective, but effects may be limited, localised or dependent on detailed design.
0	Neutral or negligible effect	The option is unlikely to have a meaningful effect on the SEA objective.
-	Negative effect	The option is likely to conflict with the SEA objective, but effects may be limited or capable of mitigation.
--	Significant negative effect	The option is likely to have a clear and substantial adverse effect, or affect a sensitive receptor, and mitigation may be difficult or uncertain.
?	Uncertain effect	The likely effect cannot be determined from available evidence, or depends on information not yet available.

The assessment should include narrative alongside scoring. Narrative is important because the same score can arise for different reasons. It should explain the likely pathway of effect, assumptions, uncertainty, mitigation and whether effects are temporary, permanent, direct, indirect, cumulative, short-term, medium-term or long-term.

Spatial constraints and informants

The constraints and informants in Appendix B will provide the spatial evidence used to apply the SEA objectives consistently to potential development sites and reasonable alternatives. The schedule is intended to support consistent and transparent screening, but it does not treat every mapped feature as an absolute constraint. It distinguishes, where possible, between matters that may restrict development, matters that require consultation or specialist assessment, and information that should inform site design, mitigation or delivery.

The schedule is being developed alongside wider Council work to create a shared constraints framework across Planning Policy, Development Management and GIS. This work will review omissions, duplication, dataset quality, purpose, ownership and update arrangements, with specialist input on matters including flood risk, hazardous installations, open space and biodiversity. The constraints schedule should therefore be treated as an iterative evidence-management tool, which is currently under review and development.

Recording the reasonable alternatives audit trail

The SEA will record how reasonable alternatives have been identified, screened and assessed. This will help demonstrate compliance with the requirement to assess the likely significant environmental effects of the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives, considering the plan's objectives and geographical scope. The Environmental Report will also explain the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and describe how the assessment was undertaken.

At this stage, the Council has not selected a preferred spatial strategy, policy approach or package of site allocations. The purpose of the SEA process is to ensure that reasonable alternatives are identified and assessed before decisions are made on the preferred approach.

The audit trail is intended to show that options have been considered transparently and assessed on a broadly comparable basis. It will also record why options have been rejected where they are not considered reasonable alternatives. This will reduce the risk that reasonable alternatives are treated only briefly, excluded without explanation, or left to be understood through a wider paper trail.

The table below sets out the steps the Council will follow to record how reasonable alternatives are identified, screened, assessed and reviewed. It is intended to provide a clear audit trail from the initial long list of options through to the alternatives assessed in the Environmental Report. The process will help show why some options are carried forward, why others are rejected, and how the preferred approach has been compared with other realistic options on a consistent basis.

Stage	Purpose	Output
Identify option	Record the option and the issue it addresses, such as growth distribution, housing mix, regeneration, density or infrastructure.	Long list of potential options.
Initial screening	Remove options that are not genuinely available, outside the Local Plan's scope, duplicate another option, or clearly unable to meet the plan's objectives.	Screening table with reasons.
Select reasonable alternatives	Identify options that could realistically meet or contribute to the Local Plan's objectives.	Shortlist of reasonable alternatives.

Assess alternatives	Assess each reasonable alternative against the SEA objectives using the same framework as the preferred option.	Comparable SEA appraisal.
Record reasons	Explain why the preferred approach has been selected and why alternatives have been rejected or carried forward.	Audit trail in the Environmental Report.
Review and update	Reconsider alternatives if new evidence or consultation responses materially change the position.	Updated appraisal or addendum where needed.

Mitigation and monitoring

The Environmental Report will identify proposed measures for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the Local Plan, in accordance with regulation 17 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Monitoring measures will be developed in response to the effects identified through the assessment and will focus on significant effects, material uncertainties and the potential for unforeseen adverse effects.

Existing monitoring arrangements, including the Authority Monitoring Report and environmental monitoring undertaken by the Council and relevant external bodies, will be used where suitable. New indicators or data collection requirements will be proposed only where they are necessary to provide effective monitoring and cannot reasonably be met through existing arrangements.

The final monitoring framework will identify, as appropriate, the effect to be monitored, the relevant indicator or evidence source, the responsible body, the frequency of monitoring and the circumstances in which remedial action may need to be considered. Monitoring will be proportionate and will not seek to measure every matter covered by the SEA objectives.

7. Consultation and next steps (Task A5)

Consultation is an important part of SEA. The purpose of consulting on the scoping report is to test whether the proposed scope, baseline, key issues and SEA objectives are appropriate. The Council will consult the statutory environmental bodies: the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Council may also invite comments from other relevant organisations, including infrastructure providers, neighbouring authorities, health bodies, transport bodies, nature conservation organisations and other consultees involved in the Local Plan process. It is not a consultation on preferred Local Plan policies, allocations or development proposals.

Comments received on this scoping report will be reviewed and recorded. Where appropriate, they will be used to update the baseline, refine the SEA objectives, adjust the assessment method or identify further evidence needs. A summary of consultation comments and the Council's response should be included in the next version of the SEA documentation.

After scoping, the Council will use the SEA framework to assess reasonable alternatives and emerging Local Plan options. This will include the spatial strategy, thematic policies, site allocations and any reasonable alternatives that are available. The Environmental Report will then be published alongside the relevant Local Plan consultation stage. It will set out the likely significant environmental effects of the plan, reasonable alternatives, mitigation measures and proposed monitoring.

The SEA will remain iterative. If the Local Plan changes materially after consultation, the SEA will be updated to assess those changes. At adoption, the Council will publish the required post-adoption statement explaining how environmental considerations and consultation responses have been considered and how significant effects will be monitored.

Suggested consultation questions

- Do you agree that the scoping report identifies the main plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives relevant to the Nottingham Local Plan?
- Are there any additional baseline sources or environmental issues that should be included?
- Do you agree with the proposed SEA objectives and assessment approach?
- Are there any specific reasonable alternatives or cumulative effects that the SEA should assess as the Local Plan develops?
- Are there any matters that should be considered outside of the scope of the SEA because they are unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects?

Appendix A: Review of Relevant Plans, Programmes and Environmental Protection Objectives

This appendix records the plans, programmes, strategies and environmental protection objectives that are relevant to the Nottingham Local Plan and its Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose is to identify the wider policy and evidence context within which the Local Plan is being prepared, and to show how relevant objectives have informed the SEA framework.

The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to include an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme and its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes. They also require relevant environmental protection objectives established at international, national and other relevant levels to be identified, together with the way those objectives and environmental considerations have been considered during plan preparation.

The schedule below is a review schedule. It will be updated before the scoping report is finalised and again before the Environmental Report is published. It includes selected non-environmental plans and evidence where they affect environmental pathways, material assets, infrastructure capacity, health, accessibility, climate resilience or the deliverability of Local Plan mitigation.

Level	Plan, programme or objective	Date / status	Main objectives or relevant content	Relevance to Nottingham Local Plan	Implications for SEA objectives / assessment	Source type
International and retained European	SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	2001 / 2004; Regulations current, as amended	Requires assessment of likely significant environmental effects and reasonable alternatives for qualifying plans and programmes.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Provides the legal and procedural framework for SEA, including consultation, mitigation, monitoring and the post-adoption statement.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
International and retained European	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework	2022; current international framework	Sets global goals and targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems and improve ecological connectivity.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Assess protection, restoration and connection of habitats, including designated sites, priority habitats and the wider urban ecological network.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
International and retained European	UN 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals	2015; current international framework	Provides a global framework covering poverty, health, inequality, sustainable cities, responsible consumption, climate action, water and biodiversity.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Use as a broad reference point for integrated social, economic and environmental outcomes without treating the goals as local statutory targets.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework

International and retained European	Paris Agreement	2015; in force	Commits parties to limit global temperature rise and strengthen adaptation and climate resilience.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Assess how spatial choices influence greenhouse gas emissions, low-carbon energy, sustainable transport, overheating, flood resilience and green infrastructure.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
International and retained European	European Landscape Convention	2000; UK ratified 2006 and in force for the UK from 2007	Promotes protection, management and planning of all landscapes, including urban, peri-urban, everyday and degraded landscapes.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Assess landscape and townscape character, visual amenity, local distinctiveness, strategic views, public realm and cumulative effects of regeneration and taller development.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
International and retained European	Aarhus Convention	1998; in force for the UK	Establishes rights relating to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making and access to justice.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Publish accessible environmental information and provide effective participation while options remain open. Record how consultation influences the SEA and Local Plan.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
International and retained European	European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised)	1992; in force	Promotes identification, protection and integrated management of archaeological heritage.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Assess effects on known and potential archaeology, including Nottingham's cave network and below-ground remains.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
International and retained European	Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, as implemented through domestic legislation	1992 / 2009; implemented domestically	Provide the European framework for protection of habitat sites, wild birds, habitats and species.	Establishes an environmental objective or legal context relevant to spatial planning in Nottingham.	Undertake HRA where required and consider pathways including air quality, water, recreation and ecological connectivity, while keeping SEA and HRA tests distinct.	International agreement / retained European or domestic statutory framework
National	Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026	2026; in force from 25 March 2026	Provide the procedural framework for local plans under the new plan-making system, with transitional arrangements for legacy plans.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Ensure commencement, project management, consultation, evidence publication, examination and monitoring meet the applicable requirements.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance

National	National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance	2026	Provide national policy and guidance for plan-making and development across housing, economy, transport, design, climate, flood risk, natural environment and heritage.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Ensure consistency with national policy and reflect guidance on evidence, reasonable alternatives, proportionality, viability, uncertainty and monitoring.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	National Grid Network Development Plan (NDP), including National Grid Electricity Distribution Future Energy Scenarios	2026 and emerging.	Sets out National Grid Electricity Distribution's ten-year plan for developing the electricity distribution network. The plan assesses future network suitability for demand and generation growth over the next 5 to 10 years, identifies network constraints, and considers potential interventions including flexibility services, conventional reinforcement and operational mitigation.	Relevant to growth delivery, energy infrastructure, heat decarbonisation, electric vehicle charging, renewable energy, storage, data centres and other electricity-intensive uses. It can help identify where electricity network capacity, reinforcement, substations, cable routes or flexibility solutions may affect the location, phasing, viability or deliverability of development.	Assess whether growth options align with known or emerging electricity network capacity and planned reinforcement. Identify where development may require network upgrades, safeguarding of infrastructure, phasing triggers or early engagement with National Grid. Avoid assuming that low-carbon heat, EV charging, renewable energy or energy-intensive employment uses are deliverable without considering local distribution-network capacity and timing.	Infrastructure provider plan / utility-network evidence
National	National Framework for Water Resources 2025: Water for Growth, Nature and a Resilient Future	2025; current	Sets England's long-term water-resource needs and actions required for resilient and environmentally sustainable supplies.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess water demand, efficiency, local supply and network constraints, environmental limits and alignment with regional and water-company plans.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Road Investment Strategy 3 and National Highways Strategic Road Network evidence	RIS3 covers 2026 to 2031	Sets national priorities for the strategic road network, including operation, maintenance, renewal, performance and enhancement of England's motorways and major A roads.	Relevant to Nottingham's relationship with the M1, A52, A453 and wider SRN, including freight, commuter movements, regeneration traffic,	Assess effects of growth options on SRN safety and operation, junction capacity, traffic, freight, air quality, carbon emissions and severance. Distinguish committed schemes	Infrastructure provider plan / utility-network evidence

			Supporting National Highways evidence identifies network performance, constraints, priorities and possible interventions.	strategic connectivity and construction impacts.	from uncommitted pipeline or aspirational interventions and identify where National Highways engagement is required.	
National	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025, including annual progress report 2025 to 2026.	2025; current statutory improvement plan	Sets the current cross-government plan for restoring nature, improving environmental quality, resource efficiency, environmental security and access to nature.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Use relevant goals and target-delivery plans to assess nature recovery, water, air, waste, resource efficiency, resilience and access to nature.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 and Environmental Delivery Plans	2025; provisions being commenced in stages	Introduces planning and infrastructure reforms, including a framework for Environmental Delivery Plans and nature-restoration measures.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Monitor commencement and supporting regulations. Do not assume that an Environmental Delivery Plan removes site-specific requirements unless the legal mechanism applies.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	National standards for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	Updated 2025; current standards	Set national expectations for the design and performance of sustainable drainage systems, including runoff quantity and quality, amenity, biodiversity, construction, adoption, operation and long-term maintenance.	Provides the national standards relevant to drainage policy, development options and site mitigation in Nottingham.	Assess whether SuDS are integrated into site design, have clear adoption and maintenance arrangements and provide compatible flood-risk, water-quality, biodiversity and amenity benefits.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites	2012; updated December 2024	Sets national policy for assessing need and providing suitable accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess accommodation needs, site supply, accessibility, environmental suitability and equal-treatment requirements.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3)	2023-2028; published 2023 and corrected 2024	Sets government actions to adapt to heat, flooding, drought, infrastructure disruption, health and natural-environment risks.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess overheating, flood resilience, water stress, green infrastructure and vulnerability of	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance

					communities, buildings and infrastructure.	
National	Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework	2023; current guidance	Provides principles, standards and mapping resources for accessible, connected and multifunctional green and blue infrastructure.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess quantity, quality, accessibility, connectivity, management and distribution of green-infrastructure benefits.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and Environmental Outcomes Reports provisions	2023; relevant provisions subject to secondary legislation and transition	Provides powers for planning reform and a future Environmental Outcomes Reports system.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Keep the assessment regime under review and record any legal or methodological change during plan preparation.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Humber River Basin Management Plan	Updated 2022; current cycle	Sets objectives and programmes of measures to prevent deterioration and improve water-body ecological and chemical status.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess effects on the Trent, Leen, canals, groundwater and receiving waters, including wastewater and contaminated-land pathways.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Environment Act 2021	2021; current, as amended	Establishes environmental targets and measures for biodiversity net gain, local nature recovery, air, water and resource efficiency.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess biodiversity net gain, nature recovery, water and air quality, waste reduction and alignment with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain	2021; current transport decarbonisation strategy	Sets the national approach to reducing transport emissions through mode shift, public transport, active travel and cleaner vehicles.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess whether the spatial strategy reduces private-car dependence and supports walking, cycling, public transport and efficient freight.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Clean Air Strategy 2019 and local air-quality management framework	2019; current framework	Sets the national direction for reducing pollutant emissions and associated health and environmental effects.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess emissions and exposure from transport, heating, construction and other sources, including sensitive uses and unequal exposure.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	National Design Guide and National Model Design Code	2019 / 2021; current national guidance	Set principles for well-designed places, including context, movement, nature,	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the	Assess design quality, density, tall buildings, public realm, accessibility, liveability,	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance

			public space, built form, resources and lifespan.	Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	climate response and local distinctiveness.	
National	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended	2017; current, as amended	Provide the domestic framework for protecting habitats sites and species and undertaking HRA.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Coordinate SEA and HRA evidence, including in-combination effects, while keeping their legal tests distinct.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	National Planning Policy for Waste and Waste Management Plan for England	2014 / 2021; current policy and plan	Support sustainable waste management, resource efficiency and movement up the waste hierarchy.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Avoid conflict with waste infrastructure and assess building reuse, materials, construction waste and circular-economy opportunities.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and national flood-risk policy	2010; current framework	Set responsibilities for managing flood risk, including Lead Local Flood Authority functions and sustainable drainage.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Apply the sequential approach and assess all sources of flooding, climate allowances, residual risk and SuDS delivery and maintenance.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty	2010; current statutory duty	Require due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Coordinate SEA with Equality Impact Assessment and identify differential distribution of environmental benefits, risks and access.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Climate Change Act 2008, carbon budgets and national net zero policy	2008; current, as amended	Establish the legally binding emissions-reduction framework, carbon budgets and the national adaptation cycle.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess emissions within planning influence, low-carbon infrastructure and resilience over the lifetime of development.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended	2004; current statutory framework	Provides the statutory basis for local development plans and the objective of contributing to sustainable development.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Align the Local Plan, SEA process, consultation, evidence and decision-making audit trail with statutory requirements.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
National	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006	1981 / 2006; current, as amended	Provide statutory protection for wildlife and sites and establish the public authority biodiversity duty.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess effects on designated and non-designated sites, protected and priority species, habitats and ecological networks.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance

National	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	1979 / 1990; current, as amended	Provide statutory protection for scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas.	Provides the statutory, policy or guidance context within which the Nottingham Local Plan is prepared.	Assess heritage significance, setting, archaeology, cumulative townscape effects and opportunities for appropriate reuse and enhancement.	Statutory provision or national policy, plan or guidance
Sub-regional and development plan	East Midlands Combined County Authority Corporate Plan 2025-2026 and investment programmes	2025-2026; current	Sets near-term priorities and programmes for transport, skills, housing, economic development and net zero.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Reflect funded and reasonably foreseeable cross-boundary investment and dependencies, distinguishing commitments from aspirations.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Local Area Energy Plan for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire	Emerging	Provides a strategic assessment of future energy demand, heat decarbonisation, electricity infrastructure, energy generation, storage and network investment.	Affects Nottingham through cross-boundary energy systems and infrastructure requirements that may influence growth and development delivery.	Assess whether growth options support heat-network expansion, renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure, electricity-network reinforcement, energy resilience and deliverable decarbonisation pathways.	Emerging sub-regional strategy / energy-system evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan	Adopted September 2025	Provides the statutory waste planning strategy and development-management framework.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Do not duplicate waste policy; recognise safeguarded facilities, capacity, resource efficiency and development-plan relationships.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy	2025; current statutory spatial strategy	Identifies local priorities and opportunity areas for nature recovery.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Use priorities and mapping to assess habitat protection, restoration, connectivity, biodiversity net gain and long-term management.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Biodiversity Net Gain Framework for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham	2025; current local framework	Provides a shared approach to mandatory biodiversity net gain, strategic priorities and delivery expectations.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships	Assess the location, additionality, long-term management and monitoring of gains while avoiding double counting.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence

				or cross-boundary systems.		
Sub-regional and development plan	Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and Sustainability Appraisal	Publication Draft 2025; subsequent status to be updated	Provide the emerging strategic growth framework and associated assessment evidence for Greater Nottingham.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Use relevant evidence as a starting point but reassess alternatives and effects for Nottingham City and update the formal status.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Greater Nottingham Water Cycle Study	2024; published	Assesses water supply, wastewater, water quality and flood-related infrastructure constraints associated with growth to 2041.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Align growth and phasing with water and wastewater capacity and identify uncertain reinforcement, environmental capacity and mitigation.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Severn Trent Water Resources Management Plan 2024 and Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan 2023	2024 / 2023; current company plans	Set plans for secure water supplies and long-term drainage and wastewater resilience.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Test growth and phasing against existing and programmed capacity and distinguish secured investment from future or developer-dependent works.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Greater Nottingham Blue-Green Infrastructure Strategy	2022; current strategic evidence	Identifies strategic blue-green assets, networks and opportunities across Greater Nottingham.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Protect and strengthen cross-boundary ecological, water, active-travel and recreation networks while applying current city evidence.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Humber River Basin Management Plan and Lower Trent and Erewash abstraction licensing strategy	2022 / current	Provide catchment and water-resource objectives for water quality, ecological status, abstraction and availability.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Assess cumulative demand and quality effects on the Trent, Leen, canals, groundwater and associated habitats.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan and future minerals arrangements for Nottingham City	County plan adopted 2021; city arrangements under review	Sets minerals supply, safeguarding and environmental-protection policies for Nottinghamshire.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Consider safeguarded resources and infrastructure where relevant while avoiding duplication of separate minerals work.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence

Sub-regional and development plan	Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment	2021; use latest available evidence	Assesses accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and boat dwellers.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Assess whether relevant needs are addressed and whether potential locations are environmentally suitable and accessible.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Nottingham Core and Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study and Logistics Study	2021 / 2022; use latest available evidence	Provide evidence on employment and logistics land needs across the functional economic area.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Assess employment provision, accessibility, freight and transport effects and environmental constraints, distinguishing city and wider-area needs.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Housing Needs Assessment	2020; updated 2024	Provides evidence on housing need, mix, affordability and market characteristics.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Inform assessment of housing supply, type, tenure, affordability, accessibility and specialist needs, using newer city evidence where available.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Air Quality Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire 2020-2030	2020-2030; current strategy	Provides a cross-boundary framework for reducing nitrogen dioxide and particulate pollution and related health effects.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Assess transport, domestic and commercial emissions and exposure and support consistent cross-boundary action.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham City Aligned Core Strategies	Adopted 2014; current strategic development plan pending replacement	Set adopted strategic policies for Nottingham City with a plan period to 2028.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Use as part of the existing-plan baseline and compare proposed replacement policies and alternatives against it.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Greater Nottingham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and subsequent addenda and reviews	2010; 2017 addendum and later updates	Provide strategic evidence on fluvial and other flood risks, including the Trent and Leen.	Affects Nottingham through the development plan, shared evidence, functional relationships or cross-boundary systems.	Use the most current modelling and record limitations, climate allowances, defence dependency and residual risk.	Adopted or emerging development plan / sub-regional strategy or evidence
Sub-regional and	East Midlands Combined County Authority Mayor's	Emerging; consultation on the Mayor's Transport	Emerging long-term transport strategy for the EMCCA area.	Relevant to transport investment, public transport, active travel,	Align growth options with emerging regional transport priorities while	Emerging sub-regional transport strategy

development plan	Transport Plan / emerging regional Local Transport Plan	Plan took place from 17 November 2025 to 8 February 2026	EMCCA is the Local Transport Authority and is developing a single area-wide Local Transport Plan which, once adopted, is expected to replace the existing transport plans for Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.	freight, decarbonisation, regional connectivity and the alignment between land-use planning and transport delivery.	distinguishing adopted commitments from emerging priorities. Assess whether transport capacity, funding, phasing and accessibility assumptions are realistic and consistent with EMCCA strategy development.	
Sub-regional and development plan	Network Rail East Midlands Route and Midland Main Line Upgrade evidence	Current route and project evidence; update as schemes progress	Provides rail infrastructure context for the East Midlands route, including Derby, Nottingham and Leicester and the Midland Main Line. Current upgrade work includes Midland Main Line electrification and improvements intended to support more reliable, quieter and greener journeys.	Relevant to rail accessibility, Nottingham Station, regional commuting, interchanges, rail freight, regeneration around stations and opportunities to reduce reliance on private car travel.	Assess whether growth options support access to rail and interchange, and whether they create implications for station capacity, rail-adjacent development, construction impacts or freight. Avoid assuming service or infrastructure improvements are committed unless confirmed through Network Rail, DfT or operator evidence.	Rail infrastructure provider evidence
Sub-regional and development plan	Midlands Connect strategy, studies and business plans	Current and emerging programmes; update as studies progress	Sets strategic transport priorities for the Midlands, including road, rail, freight, innovation, electric vehicle infrastructure and wider regional connectivity. Midlands Connect develops and promotes transport projects intended to provide economic, social and environmental benefits across the region.	Relevant to Nottingham's cross-boundary connections, regional economic role, freight movements, strategic public transport, decarbonisation and links to wider Midland's investment priorities.	Use as strategic context for cross-boundary transport dependencies and regional connectivity. Distinguish strategic priorities, studies and business-case development from committed funded schemes when assessing alternatives, mitigation and infrastructure delivery.	Sub-national transport body strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham City Vision 2050: Home, Heart, Host	2026; emerging/current city vision	Sets a long-term city vision covering homes, green infrastructure, transport, energy, innovation, business,	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be	Test environmental effects and delivery dependencies of associated spatial choices; do not treat	Local strategy / evidence

			culture, sport and heritage.	influenced by the Local Plan.	vision ambitions as statutory policy tests.	
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham City Council Plan 2025-2029	2025-2029; current	Sets current corporate priorities and intended outcomes for residents and the city.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Identify where the Local Plan can support housing, regeneration, infrastructure, environmental improvement and inclusive growth.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Tomorrow's NUH Programme	Emerging long-term programme; main scheme not expected to begin before 2037	Proposes modernisation and reconfiguration of the Queen's Medical Centre and City Hospital campuses and associated healthcare infrastructure.	Provides Nottingham-specific health-infrastructure and land-use context that may be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess land safeguarding, accessibility, transport demand, utility capacity, energy use, carbon emissions and environmental effects without treating the programme as fully committed.	Local programme / infrastructure evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment	Current assessment; update expected by the end of 2026	Provides a strategic overview of past flooding, locally significant flood-risk areas and interactions between sources of flood risk within Nottingham.	Provides Nottingham-specific flood-risk evidence relevant to site assessment, alternatives and mitigation.	Use alongside the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, national mapping and site-specific evidence. Review the updated assessment before the Environmental Report and site assessment are finalised.	Local statutory assessment / flood-risk evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Connected Energy City and heat-network strategies, including Heat Network Zoning Opportunity Report: Nottingham	2025 and current/emerging evidence	Support existing and potential district heating and low-carbon energy infrastructure.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess heat-network opportunities, future heat sources, capacity, viability and phasing without assuming delivery is secured.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	Published October 2025; current six-year strategy	Sets the Council's approach to local flood risk, resilience, evidence, asset management and nature-based solutions.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess surface water, groundwater, ordinary watercourses, SuDS, vulnerable communities and delivery and	Local strategy / evidence

					maintenance responsibilities.	
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Current; living documents with periodic updates	Identify health priorities, inequalities and wider determinants of health.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess distributional effects on health, housing, air quality, active travel, open space, services and climate vulnerability.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027	2024-2027; current	Promotes equality, accessibility and inclusive decision-making.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Coordinate SEA and Equality Impact Assessment and consider who benefits or is exposed to environmental harm.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Homes Fit for the Future	2024-2028; current housing strategy	Covers housing supply, quality, homelessness and changing needs.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess housing mix, affordability, quality, accessibility, specialist housing, rented housing and neighbourhood balance.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Economic Growth Plan and emerging city-centre regeneration strategies	2024 and emerging updates	Set priorities for jobs, skills, innovation, business growth and regeneration.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess employment land, city-centre renewal, inclusive access to jobs, infrastructure and environmental effects.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Greener, Healthier, Happier Nottingham Greenspace Strategy and Green Grid proposals	Adopted October 2024	Provides a framework for connected green infrastructure supporting biodiversity, health, active travel and climate resilience.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess green-space access, ecological connectivity, active travel, cooling, drainage, delivery and long-term maintenance.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Eating and Moving for Good Health Strategy	2022-2032	Promotes healthier food and physical activity through a whole-system approach.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess healthy food environments, walkable neighbourhoods, active travel and access to recreation and open space.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Open and Green Spaces Quality Audit and current open-space evidence	2021; supplemented by current evidence	Assesses the quantity, type, quality, value and accessibility of open and green spaces.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Distinguish ecological value, open-space quality and practical accessibility and assess deficiencies, barriers and management.	Local strategy / evidence

Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham City Land and Planning Policies Document	Adopted January 2020	Contains detailed policies and site allocations for Nottingham City.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess retained, amended and replacement policies and allocations against updated evidence.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Carbon Neutral Nottingham 2028 Charter	2020 and subsequent updates	Provides the city-wide framework for reducing carbon emissions and planning energy-system change.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess location, transport, building reuse, heat networks, renewable energy, grid constraints and climate adaptation, proportionate to planning influence.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Air Quality Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire 2020-2030 and Nottingham Annual Status Reports	2020-2030; monitoring updated annually	Provide strategic objectives and current monitoring evidence for air quality.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Use current monitoring and AQMA evidence to assess emissions, exposure, sensitive uses and cumulative transport and construction effects.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Playing Pitch Strategy and other sport and recreation evidence	2015-2020; use with current or successor evidence	Assesses requirements for playing pitches and associated facilities.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess protection, enhancement and provision, taking account of accessibility, land requirements and changing demand.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Heritage Strategy, conservation-area documents, Historic Environment Record and Caves Technical Guide	Strategy 2015-2030; evidence and guidance updated periodically	Provide the local framework and evidence for designated and non-designated heritage, archaeology, conservation areas and caves.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess significance, setting, archaeology, caves, strategic views, heritage at risk and appropriate reuse and interpretation.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham City Centre Urban Design Guide and emerging design, tall-buildings and strategic-views evidence	Guide 2009; emerging evidence current	Provide city-centre design guidance and evidence on urban form and character.	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be influenced by the Local Plan.	Assess density, height, skyline, microclimate, public realm, heritage relationships, liveability and infrastructure capacity.	Local strategy / evidence
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Contaminated Land Strategy	2001; statutory strategy subject to periodic review	Sets the Council's approach to identifying and managing contaminated land	Provides Nottingham-specific policy direction, evidence or delivery context that can be	Assess land-quality risks and opportunities for remediation, recognising	Local strategy / evidence

			under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.	influenced by the Local Plan.	that detailed conclusions require site investigation.	
Local Nottingham strategies and evidence	Nottingham Local Transport Plan 3 and successor arrangements	2011 to 2026; current local context pending replacement by EMCCA regional LTP	Sets Nottingham's existing local transport strategy, covering buses, trams, trains, cycling, walking networks and roads, with objectives relating to sustainable transport, congestion, environment, health, accessibility and economic connectivity.	Relevant as current local transport context until replaced by EMCCA's area-wide Local Transport Plan. Supports baseline understanding of public transport, active travel, accessibility, congestion, parking, carbon emissions and transport resilience.	Use as current local transport evidence where still applicable, while updating the assessment as successor EMCCA transport policy emerges. Avoid relying on dated assumptions where more recent transport modelling, programme or operator evidence is available.	Local strategy / current transport evidence

Review note. This schedule should be reviewed as the Local Plan evidence base develops. Priority updates include changes to national planning policy and guidance, Environmental Outcomes Reports transition, the outcome of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan examination, the published Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and updated flood risk, transport, infrastructure, housing, health, climate and economic evidence. The Environmental Report should record any document that materially changes the SEA framework, reasonable alternatives, mitigation or monitoring.

Appendix B: Draft spatial constraints and informants for Local Plan and SEA assessment

This annex identifies the spatial constraints, designations and other environmental and planning information that the Council proposes to consider when assessing potential development sites and reasonable alternatives through the Local Plan and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Its purpose is to provide a transparent record of the matters that may affect site suitability, environmental sensitivity, development capacity, infrastructure requirements or the need for mitigation and specialist advice. Inclusion in this annex does not mean that development is automatically precluded.

Some matters represent statutory or policy constraints, while others function as consultation triggers, informatives, indicators of potential risk or prompts for further investigation. The significance of each matter will depend on its source, status, spatial accuracy, date, relationship with the proposed use and the scope for avoidance or mitigation.

The list of constraints is being reviewed as part of wider work between Planning Policy, Development Management, GIS and specialist services to establish a shared constraints framework. This work includes checking for missing, obsolete, duplicated or unclear datasets, defining how each dataset should be used, and establishing arrangements for ownership, maintenance and notification of material changes. As such, this reflects the current status quo, with updates currently under review.

Category	Subcategory	Constraint
Environment	Conservation	Ancient Woodlands
Environment	Conservation	Bat Survey Assessment
Environment	Conservation	Ecological Assessment (Habitat Survey Data)
Environment	Conservation	Local Geological Sites
Environment	Conservation	Local Nature Reserves
Environment	Conservation	Local Wildlife Sites
Environment	Conservation	Open Space Network
Environment	Conservation	Ordnance Survey National Geographic Database (OS NGD) - Greenspace Extract
Environment	Conservation	Priority Habitats Inventory
Environment	Conservation	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
Environment	Conservation	Tree Preservation Orders
Environment	Conservation	Trees
Environment	Conservation & Enhancement	LNRS - Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACBs)
Environment	Conservation & Enhancement	LNRS - Combined Mapped Measures
Environment	Land Protection	Agricultural Land – Grade 1-3
Environment	Land Protection	Greenbelt
Environment	Water	Source Protection Zones
Environment	Water	MasterMap Inland Water polygons

Hazard	Flooding	Flooding - Flood Zone 2
Hazard	Flooding	Flooding - Flood Zone 3
Hazard	Flooding	Risk of Flooding from Surface Water: High Risk
Hazard	Flooding	Risk of Flooding from Surface Water: Medium Risk
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Leen 100 20pc
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Leen 100yr
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Leen 25yr
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Trent 100 20pc
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Trent 1000yr
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Trent 100yr
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA - Trent 20yr
Hazard	Flooding	SFRA- Leen 1000yr
Hazard	Hazardous Features	Hazardous Installations
Hazard	Hazardous Features	Hazardous Pipelines
Hazard	Hazardous Features	High Voltage Overhead Powerlines
Hazard	Land Contamination & Conditions	Coal - Development High Risk Area
Hazard	Land Contamination & Conditions	Coal - Development Low Risk Area
Hazard	Land Contamination & Conditions	Contaminated Land
Hazard	Land Contamination & Conditions	Landfill - Historic
Hazard	Land Contamination & Conditions	RADON Gas
Heritage & Character	Area	Archaeological Constraints Areas
Heritage & Character	Area	Article 4 Direction Areas
Heritage & Character	Area	Conservation Areas
Heritage & Character	Site	Caves
Heritage & Character	Site	Listed Buildings
Heritage & Character	Site	Local list of heritage buildings
Heritage & Character	Site	Registered Parks and Gardens
Heritage & Character	Site	Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Informant	General	House Price Zones
Informant	General	Wards
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Centres
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	City Centre Boundary
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	City Centre Quarters
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Development Sites

Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Enterprise Zone
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Focal Points within the Townscape
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Independent Retail Clusters
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Land Safeguarded for Health facilities
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Landmark Buildings
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Landmark Features
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Major Business Parks & Industrial Estates
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Mineral Safeguarding Area
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Primary Shopping Area
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Primary Shopping Frontages
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Public Squares
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Retail Opportunity Areas
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Supporting the Growth of Further and Higher Education Facilities
Informant	Local Plan Layer (Other)	Waterside Regeneration Zone
Transport & Infrastructure	Energy	District Heating Network
Transport & Infrastructure	Energy	Energy Infrastructure Safeguarding Areas (Draft)
Transport & Infrastructure	Energy	Heat Network Zones (Indicative)
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Adopted Highways
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Classified Streets
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Connecting Links
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Highway Improvement Route Safeguarding
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	National Cycle Route
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	NET
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Paths
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Proposed Cycle Route Improvements
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Proposed Enhanced Pedestrian Connections

Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Proposed Pedestrian Environment Improvements
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Public Rights of Way
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Rail Line Upgrading & Electrification (Indicative)
Transport & Infrastructure	Linear Transport Features	Roads
Transport & Infrastructure	PT - points	Bus Stops
Transport & Infrastructure	PT - points	Proposed NET Stop (Indicative)
Transport & Infrastructure	PT - points	Railway Station Safeguarding
Transport & Infrastructure	PT - points	Train and Tram Stops
Transport & Infrastructure	PT - polygon	Walking distance: Train and Tram Stops

Notes:

1. Local Plan Layer currently reflects the policy position as per the previous Part 2 Local Plan. These will be updated to reflect the draft position of the current local plan and thus features and exact layers may change.
2. Similarly, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment layers are as per previous assessment, this may be updated should an updated study be undertaken.
3. Walking distance: Train and Tram Stops is to inform the minimum density requirements as per the NPPF policies on density around stations.
4. Given that the whole of NCC is declared as an Air Quality Management Area, this is not shown as a specific constraint.

Appendix C: Sources and Evidence Base

Purpose and use of this appendix

This appendix identifies the principal legislation, policies, strategies, datasets and technical studies that directly informed the main content, baseline, issues and SEA objectives in this scoping report. It is not intended to provide a bibliographic reference for every plan or programme listed in Section 3 or Appendix A. Appendix A performs that policy-context function.

SEA legislation, plan preparation and methodology

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Planning Inspectorate (2026), current guidance for creating, updating and examining local plans under the 2026 plan-making system. [Available online](#).
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005), A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. [Available online](#).
- UK Government (2004), Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, SI 2004/1633, as amended. [Available online](#).
- UK Government (2023), Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, as amended. [Available online](#).
- UK Government (2026), Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, SI 2026/186; in force from 25 March 2026. [Available online](#).
- UK Parliament (2004), Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended. [Available online](#).

National planning and environmental framework

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024, corrected 2025), National Planning Policy Framework. [Available online](#).
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (current), Planning Practice Guidance. [Available online](#).
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2025), Environmental Improvement Plan 2025; and (2026), Environmental Improvement Plan annual progress report 2025 to 2026. Available online: [source 1](#) and [source 2](#).

Development plan and Greater Nottingham evidence

- Broxtowe Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council and Nottingham City Council (2014), Aligned Core Strategies Part 1 Local Plan, insofar as it applies to Nottingham City. [Available online](#).
- Greater Nottingham Plan Making Authorities (2024), Sustainability Appraisal Appendix A: Review of Plans and Programmes, September 2024. [Available online](#).
- Greater Nottingham Plan Making Authorities (2024), Sustainability Appraisal Appendix B: Baseline and Appendix G: Nottingham City Sites, September 2024. [Available online](#).
- Greater Nottingham Plan Making Authorities (2025), Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Publication Draft, March 2025; submitted for examination on 22 December 2025. [Available online](#).

- Greater Nottingham Plan Making Authorities (2025), Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Sustainability Appraisal Main Report and Non-Technical Summary, March 2025. [Available online.](#)
- Greater Nottingham Plan Making Authorities (2025), Housing Background Paper, Employment Background Paper and updated supporting documents accompanying the March 2025 Publication Draft. [Available online.](#)
- Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership (2010 and subsequent updates), Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, including the 2017 addendum and the November 2025 Flood Modelling and Sequential Test Update. [Available online.](#)
- Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership (2024), Greater Nottingham Water Cycle Study, April 2024. [Available online.](#)
- Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership (2024), Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and (2025), Infrastructure Delivery Plan Addendum. [Available online.](#)
- Nottingham City Council (2020), Land and Planning Policies Document: Local Plan Part 2 and adopted Policies Map. [Available online.](#)
- Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council (2025), Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan, adopted by Nottingham City Council in September 2025. [Available online.](#)

Population, housing, communities and health

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2025), English Housing Survey local-authority housing-stock condition modelling for 2023. [Available online.](#)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2025), English indices of deprivation 2025 and current technical documentation.
- Nottingham City Council (2025), Authority Monitoring Report, December 2025, reporting the 2024/25 monitoring year. [Available online.](#)
- Nottingham City Council (current), purpose-built student accommodation monitoring and housing land supply records.
- Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City Health and Wellbeing Board (current), Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Nottingham Insight datasets and current Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. [Available online.](#)
- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (current), Fingertips Public Health Profiles. [Available online.](#)
- Office for National Statistics (2022), Census 2021 topic summaries and local authority datasets. [Available online.](#)
- Office for National Statistics (2025), 2022-based subnational population projections and household projections for England, including variant projections and associated datasets. Released 24 June and 28 October 2025. Available online: [source 1](#) and [source 2](#).
- Office for National Statistics (2026), Population estimates – local authority based by single year of age, mid-year population estimates dataset, accessed through Nomis on 31 July 2026. [Available online.](#)

Biodiversity, open space and green infrastructure

- Nottingham City Council (2021), Open and Green Spaces Quality Audit and associated current open-space datasets.
- Nottingham City Council (2023), Calculating Green and Blue Space Coverage of Nottingham City. (GIS Team – K. Morgan). Internal document.
- Nottingham City Council (2026), Biodiversity Duty Report 2025. Draft.
- Nottingham City Council (current), Biodiversity Net Gain guidance and planning-monitoring records. [Available online.](#)
- Nottingham City Council and Ecosulis (2024), Nottingham city-wide habitat baseline: UK Habitat Classification mapping, technical report and supporting GIS, based principally on 2021-2022 survey work and amended in 2024.

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Water, flood risk and drainage

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Cultural heritage, landscape, townscape and design

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Comparable SEA and SA/SEA scoping reports used as methodological examples

The following published scoping reports were reviewed as methodological comparators when structuring the Nottingham report. They were used to compare approaches to Stage A tasks, topic-based baseline presentation, identification of environmental issues, formulation of SEA or sustainability objectives, reasonable alternatives and consultation. They are examples of practice rather than sources of Nottingham-specific evidence.

- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (2026), New Local Plan 2026-2044: Initial SEA Scoping Report for Consultation, July 2026. Used as an example of a detailed topic-based baseline, explicit treatment of data limitations and a structured assessment framework. [Available online.](#)
- Chesterfield Borough Council (2026), Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report: Post-consultation Version, June 2026. Used to compare the review of plans, policies and programmes and the way consultation comments and subsequent changes are recorded. [Available online.](#)
- East Hertfordshire District Council (2026), Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report, June 2026. Used to compare the treatment of linked SA and SEA requirements, statutory consultation and the relationship between scoping and the new Local Plan process. [Available online.](#)
- East Suffolk Council (2026), East Suffolk Local Plan Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report, June 2026. A close comparator under the 2026 plan-making system. It follows the Stage A1-A5 structure and separates the plans review, environmental baseline, issues, SEA objectives and consultation. [Available online.](#)
- North Yorkshire Council (2025), Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report: Consultation Draft, May 2025. Used to compare the links between thematic baseline review, key issues, objectives, appraisal questions, indicators and site-assessment frameworks. [Available online.](#)
- Stafford Borough Council (2026), Stafford Borough is changing... help us shape it. New Local Plan 2025–2045: Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation 2026. Used to compare the scope and structure of sustainability appraisal scoping, the integration of Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements, baseline evidence preparation, sustainability objectives, and the relationship between the appraisal process and emerging Local Plan preparation. [Available online.](#)
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council (2025), Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, May 2025. Used as an urban comparator for organising environmental, social and economic baseline information, objectives and appraisal methodology. [Available online.](#)
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (2026), Local Plan Review Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report, July 2026. Used as an example of document assurance, topic scoping, assessment methodology and transparent reporting of authorship, review and limitations. [Available online.](#)

Note: Appendix C will be updated when a new or revised source materially changes the baseline, identifies a new environmental issue, alters a reasonable alternative, changes an assessment conclusion, or provides a monitoring indicator. Routine policy-context documents that do not directly inform the main analysis are recorded in Appendix A rather than repeated in Appendix C.

Where this report uses public sector information, it is used under the Open Government Licence v3.0 unless otherwise stated.

Appendix D: Statement on the use of artificial intelligence

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used extensively to support the preparation of this draft scoping report, alongside manual research, analysis and drafting by Council officers. Artificial intelligence assisted with tasks including structuring material, reviewing and comparing documents, summarising source information, drafting and editing text, identifying possible gaps and inconsistencies, and checking internal coherence.

The use of artificial intelligence did not replace professional judgement or Council decision-making. Officers reviewed and revised the generated material and checked substantive factual statements against the legislation, policy documents, datasets and technical evidence identified in this report. Where evidence was incomplete, uncertain or dependent on emerging information, this has been identified in the text where appropriate.

Responsibility for the content, interpretation and conclusions of the scoping report remains with Nottingham City Council. The report should be read as a Council document informed by both officer work and artificial intelligence-assisted drafting, rather than as unreviewed artificial intelligence output. The evidence base and assessment will continue to be reviewed and updated as the Local Plan progresses and consultation responses and new information become available.